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MONOPHYSITISM

PAST AND PRESENT

A STUDY IN CHRISTOLOGY

BY

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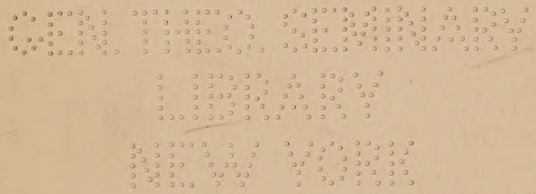

LONDON
SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING
CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE
NEW YORK: THE MACMILLAN CO.
1920

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WILLIAM CLOWES AND SONS, LIMITED,
LONDON AND BECCLES.

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MONOPHYSITISM PAST AND PRESENT

CHAPTER I

THE METAPHYSICAL BASIS OF MONOPHYSITISM

MONOPHYSITISM was a Christological heresy of the fifth century. It was condemned by the church in the middle of that century at the council of Chalcedon. Surviving its condemnation it flourished in the East for several centuries. Its adherents formed themselves into a powerful church with orders and succession of their own. Although the monophysite church has long since lost all influence, it is still in being. The Coptic and Jacobite churches of Egypt and Mesopotamia, respectively, preserve to this day the doctrines and traditions of the primitive monophysites.

The history of the sect, however, does not concern us here. The writer's purpose is to review its doctrine. Monophysitism is a system of religious thought, and, as such, its importance is out of all proportion to the present or even the past position of the churches that professed it. Its significance lies in its universality. It

is grounded in the nature of the human mind. It is found in West as well as East, to-day as well as in the early centuries of our era. Wherever men bring intellect to bear on the problem of Christ's being, the tendency to regard Him as monophysite is present.

An examination of the heresy is of practical value. Our subject-matter is not an oriental antique or a curiosity of the intellect, but a present-day problem of vital moment to the Faith. If we are concerned with a half-forgotten heresy, it is because a study of that heresy serves both as a preventive against error and as an introduction to the truth. The doctor studies disease to ascertain the conditions of health; pathological cases are often his surest guide to the normal; just so the study of heresy is the best guide to orthodox Christology. It was in conflict with monophysitism that the church of the fifth century brought to completion her dogmatic utterances about Christ; and the individual thinker to-day can gain the surest grasp of true Christology by examining the monophysite perversion.

With this practical purpose in view, we now proceed to an analysis of the heresy. Monophysitism is a body of doctrine. It is a dogmatic system, in which the individual dogmata are controlled by a principle or dominant idea. As all the particular doctrines of monophysitism depend on this principle, and, as it is not

properly a theological concept, but one borrowed from philosophy, we may call it "the metaphysical basis of monophysitism." An intelligent grasp of this basic principle is necessary to an appreciation of the whole system. Accordingly, our first concern is to ascertain and exhibit this metaphysical basis. In subsequent chapters we shall analyse in detail the doctrines specifically monophysite and trace the Christological errors back to their source in metaphysic.

THE *A PRIORI* AND *A POSTERIORI* IN CHRISTOLOGY

The following considerations prove the necessity of this procedure. Two methods of examining the being of Christ can be distinguished. According to the one method the facts of His life are reviewed as they are presented in the New Testament, and a formula is then constructed to fit them. The other method starts from the concept of a mediator between God and man. It supposes that concept actualised, and asks the question, "Of what nature must such a mediator be?" These methods may be distinguished, but they cannot be separated. No one, however scientific, can come to a study of the life of Jesus with an absolutely open mind. Presuppositions are inevitable. Similarly, as the *a priori* thinker develops his concept of a mediator, he compares the results of his thinking at every stage with the picture presented in the Gospel story, and that picture unavoidably

modifies his deductions. Both diphysite and monophysite used a combination of these two methods. Each party took the recorded facts and interpreted them in accordance with their notion of what a mediator should be. Both parties studied the same facts ; but the *a priori* of their thought differed, and so their conclusions differed. In the realm of Christology this *a priori* of thought is of paramount importance. Preconceived opinions inevitably colour our mental picture of Christ. Readers of the Gospel narrative find there the Christ they are prepared to find. On this well-recognised fact we base our contention that an examination of any Christological system must begin with the philosophy on which the system rests. That philosophy supplies the *a priori*, or the presupposition, or the metaphysical basis, whichever name we prefer.

We do not suggest that theologians have consciously adopted a metaphysical principle as the basis of their beliefs, and then have applied it to the special problem of Christology. That is a possible method but not the usual one. In most cases the philosophic basis remains in the background of consciousness ; its existence is unrecognised and its influence undetected. If Christian thinkers took the trouble to analyse the basis of their beliefs about Christ, they would not halt, as they so often do, at the stage of monophysitism. If they laid bare to the foundations

the structure of their faith, the danger of error would be reduced to a minimum. Viewed from the standpoint of timeless reason, monophysitism is based on a definite metaphysical idea. Not all monophysites have consciously adopted that basis ; many, had they recognised its presence, would have rejected it. But it was present as a tendency. A tendency may be neutralised by counteracting causes ; but it has its effect, and sooner or later it will produce positive results.

The Three Typical Christologies

The same truth holds of the other Christological systems. A different metaphysical idea lies at the root of each. Nestorian, monophysite, catholic, these three were the main types of Christologian in the fifth century. Each studied Christ's life. After studying it, the Nestorian said of Him, "There are two persons here." "Not so," said the monophysite, "I see but one incarnate nature of God the Word." The catholic replied, "You are both wrong ; there is one person in two natures." All three types deserve close study. The thinkers were devout and sincere, and, for the most part, able men. There is no question here of superficial uninformed thought, nor of moral obliquity. The disagreement was due not to their vision but to their view point, not to the object of their

thought or the process of their thinking, but to their different presuppositions and starting points.

Presented in this way the monophysite and other Christological controversies of the fifth and sixth centuries become phases of the cosmic problem. They thus regain the dignity which is theirs by right, and which they lose in the ordinary church histories. The heat of passion they aroused becomes intelligible. It was no battle about words. The stakes were high. The controversialists championed far-reaching principles with a decisive influence on the course of thought and conduct. Unfriendly critics usually portray the Christologians as narrow-minded and audacious. So, no doubt, they were, but they were not wrong-headed. If the matters in dispute between theist, deist, and pantheist are trivialities, then and then only can we regard the enterprise of the Christologians as chimerical and their achievements as futile. The different formulæ represented attitudes of mind fundamentally opposed. No peace between catholic and monophysite was possible. They had conflicting conceptions of ultimate truth.

Dependence of Christology on Philosophy

We mentioned above the two other chief Christological systems, the Nestorian and the catholic. No analysis of monophysitism which

omitted a reference to these systems would be complete. They were three nearly contemporary attempts to solve the same problem. The comparison is of special interest when, as here, fundamental principles are under examination. It demonstrates the closeness of the connection between the Christological and the cosmic problems. In each of the three cases we find that a school of philosophy corresponds to the school of theology, and that the philosopher's dominant idea about the cosmos decided the theologian's interpretation of Christ.

This connection between philosophy and Christology is of early date. From the nature of both disciplines it had to be. Even in apostolic days the meaning of the incarnation was realised. Christ was apprehended as a being of more than national or terrestrial importance. The Pauline and Johannine Christologies gave cosmic significance to His work, and so inevitably to His Person. Theologians made the tremendous surmise that Jesus of Nazareth was no other than the Logos of the Neo-Pythagoreans or the Wise One of the Stoics. That is to say, He stands not only between God and man, but between Creator and creation. He is the embodiment of the cosmic relation. From early days, then, philosophy and religion were working at the same problem; their paths met at the one goal of the Ideal Person who satisfied both head and heart. The systematic

Christology of the fifth century was, therefore, a completion of the work begun in the first.

The Christological and the Cosmic Problems

The essence of the Christological problem is the question as to the union of natures in Christ. Are there two natures divine and human in Him? Is each distinct from the other and from the person? Is the distinction conceptual or actual? The incarnation is a union. Is it a real union? If so, what did it unite? We have seen that such questions cannot be approached without presuppositions. What these presuppositions shall be is decided in the sphere of a wider problem. This wider problem is known as the cosmic problem. The solution given to it prescribes the presuppositions of any attempt to solve the specialised problem. We shall proceed to sketch the cosmic problem, and to indicate the three main types of answers given to it. It will then be evident that these three answers find their respective counterparts in the Nestorian, monophysite and the catholic solutions of the Christological problem.

As man's intellectual powers mature, two supreme generalisations force themselves on his consciousness. He conceives his experience as a whole and calls it the world; he conceives the basis of his experience as a whole and calls it

God. To some minds the world, to some minds God, is the greater reality ; but both concepts are present in varying proportions wherever thought becomes self-conscious. Here we have in its lowest terms the material for the ontological question, the first and the last problem of philosophy. God and the world, at first dimly conceived and scarcely differentiated, gradually separate and take shape in the mind as distinct entities. The concepts become principles, fixed by language and mental imagery. The gulf between them widens until they stand at opposite poles of thought. In their isolation they constitute a standing challenge to the mind of man. If he thinks the world in terms of time, he must postulate a creator. If he thinks the world out of time, he is forced to conceive a ground of the world's being. The world cannot be thought without God nor God without the world. The one necessitates the other. Yet when the thinker tries to define the terms, he can at first only do so by negatives. The world is what God is not, and God is what the world is not. The two primary concepts thus attract and repel each other. The mind's first task is to grasp them in their difference. It cannot rest there, but must proceed to attempt to reunite them and grasp them in their unity. Thus the main problem of philosophy is to conceive and find expression for the relation between God and the world. Christology attacks

essentially the same problem. Christology is an attempt to define the relation between God and the world in terms of personality.

This relation has been conceived in three modes. According to the level of thought reached, or, as led by their disposition and education, men have made their choice between three mediating concepts. Hence derive three divergent types of thought and three outlooks on life fundamentally opposed. We shall take them in their logical sequence for convenience of treatment. The historical connection is of no importance for our present purpose, but it is noteworthy that the time order both of the schools of philosophy and of the corresponding Christological systems follows approximately the logical order.

The First Solution of the Cosmic Problem—Dualism

The first attempted solution of the cosmic problem is best expressed in the concept "co-existence." God and the world co-exist. God is, and the world is; their relation is expressed by an "and." "God *and* the world" is the truth, all that man can and need know. This solution is verbal. It leaves the problem more or less as it finds it. The two principles remain ultimates; neither is reduced to the other. God still stands outside the world and the world

outside God. Neither can explain the other. This dualism is the lowest stage of ontological thought. The thinker sees the problem, only to turn away from it. He surmises that there is some relation between the two ; but he cannot define it, and it remains ineffectual. This was Plato's early standpoint. He established the idea as the truth of the thing, but he failed to find expression for the relation between idea and ideate. He took refuge in symbolical language, and spoke of the thing as a " copy " of the idea or as a " participant " in it. But as there was no causation on the one side or dependence on the other side, all that the earlier Platonic philosophy achieved was in its ideal world to duplicate the real. Plato's heaven simply co-exists with the world, and the relation between them is merely verbal.

This metaphysical idea survived Plato and Plato's system, and passed into common currency. It found and still finds expression in numerous speculative and practical systems. In religious ontology we find it in deism. According to the deist there was once at a definite point of time a relation between God and the world, the relation of creation. But, creation finished, the relation ceased. In other words, God created the world, and then withdrew into Himself, leaving the world to work out its own salvation. The deist believes in God ; but his is a self-contained God, who does not interfere in the course of

things or continue creating. Such a conception of God is useless for religious purposes, because it represents Him as out of all relation with the world.

Christological Dualism—Nestorianism

The Christological counterpart of dualism and of deism is Nestorianism. The Nestorians halt at the lowest stage of Christological thought. They admit Christ to be the meeting-point of God and man, but they nullify the admission by introducing dualism into the person of Christ. They set out to find the solution of the cosmic problem in Christ; they endeavour to express the relation between God and the world in terms of His personality. They bring the two concepts together, but they do not weld them. Faith and courage fail them at the critical moment. They substitute an association for a union. They leave God and man co-existing in Christ, but not united there.

Nestorianism is a halfway house on the road from Arianism to Christianity. It is a weak compromise. The deity in Christ is admitted, but its unity with humanity denied. The divine remains external to the human nature. According to the doctrine ascribed to Nestorius two persons, the son of God and the son of Mary, at the Baptism were mysteriously associated. The union consists partly in identity of name, partly

in the gradual deepening of the association. As Jesus grew in spiritual power and knowledge and obedience to the divine will, the union which at first was relative gradually deepened towards an absolute union. Divinity was not His birthright, but acquired. Thus throughout His life the two personalities remained external to one another. The divine worked miracles; the human suffered. The Nestorian could pride himself on having preserved the reality of the divine and the reality of the human; he could worship the one and imitate the other. But his system was non-Christian, because it excludes the element of mediation. A dual personality could never make atonement or redeem humanity. God and man in Christ were brought into nominal contact, but there was provided no channel by which the divine virtue might pass into the human. The Nestorian remains content with his solution, because the background of his thought is dualist. The thinker's attitude to the cosmic problem decides his attitude to the Christological problem. Content to couple God and the world by an "and," he similarly couples by an "and" the Logos and Jesus Christ. Dividing God from the world, he divides Christ. Abandoning metaphysical relation between the cosmic principles, he despairs of finding, or, rather, has no motive for seeking a personal relation between God and man in the being of Christ.

Second Solution of the Cosmic Problem—Monism

The second solution given to the cosmic problem is of special importance for our thesis. It had a direct influence on monophysitism, and may be regarded as supplying the metaphysical basis for that heresy. It represents an advance to a higher stage of thought, just as monophysitism, which depends on it, is an advance on Nestorianism, and has always been regarded as a more venial heresy.

The mind finding no satisfaction in dualism advances to monism. The spectacle of two unrelated ultimate principles impels it to seek and, if necessary, to invent some mode of reconciling them. Explain it as we may, the craving for unity, for synthesis, for mediation is radical in human thought. The mind cannot rest at anything short of it. God and the world, held asunder conceptually or only nominally united, constitute a contradiction *in excelsis*, and, as such, provide an irresistible motive for further and deeper thought.

As is natural, the swing of the pendulum carries the mind to the opposite extreme. Co-existence failing to supply the required solution, the key is sought in identity. God and the world are thought as identical. The terms are connected by the copula. God *is* the world, and the world *is* God. This is the truth of

being, for the monist. The two principles are merged in one, and the contradiction solved by an assertion of the identity of the contradictories.

Monism takes two forms. It may be either materialist or spiritual. One term must be selected as the reality, and the other written off as an illusion. If the thinker's bent of mind be scientific, he is disposed to make the material world the only objective reality, and God becomes simply a working hypothesis or a creation of the subjective mind. It would be beside our purpose to do more than mention this phase of monism. Spiritual monism, however, requires lengthier treatment ; it is of vital importance to our subject. In this case the mind takes sides with God as against the world. God is the reality and the world the illusion. The world is God, in spite of appearances to the contrary. As world it has no substantive reality ; it has no existence for self. It is the shadow of God, an emanation from Him, or an aspect of Him. Like dualism, monism is only a sham solution of the cosmic problem. It fails to keep prominent the idea of relation. A relation must relate. If its terms are merged, the relation falls to the ground. A relation must be such that, while the terms are unified, they are preserved as realities. It must both unify and keep distinct. To abandon either God or the world is a counsel of despair. To detract from the reality of either is treason to

fact and tantamount to a shelving of the cosmic problem.

Philosophical and Theological Monism

The systems that identify God and the world range from the crude materialism of Democritus to the lofty spiritualism of Plotinus. Stoic cosmology occupies an intermediate position. The Stoic was nominally a pantheist, but he seems to have oscillated between a spiritual and a materialist explanation of the universal being. The monist system that prepared the soil for monophysitism and constantly fostered its growth was Neo-Platonism. In the hands of Plotinus all the main elements of spiritual monism were worked up into a speculative philosophy with a profound bearing on practical life. The world and the human spirit, for Plotinus, were simply manifestations of God. He taught that, as light issues from the sun and proceeds forth on its way, growing gradually dimmer till it passes into darkness, so the world of thought and thing has no true being apart from God, from whom it proceeded and to whom it returns. Spiritual monism found in Alexandria a congenial home. Blending there with oriental mysticism it produced a crop of gnostic speculative systems, in all of which Acosmism or a denial of the world was the keynote. Whether the problem was conceived in

terms of being or of value, the result was the same. The world has no true being. Its appearance of solidity is a sham. It has no value. Compared with God, it is negligible. It is but the shadow cast by the eternal sun.

The monophysite tenets traceable to monism will be considered in detail in later chapters. Here our concern is to show that monism supplies the metaphysical principle on which the heresy is based; that, as dualism provides the *a priori* of Nestorian thought, monism provides the *a priori* of monophysite thought.

Christological Monism—Monophysitism

The essential doctrine of monophysitism is the assertion of the absolute numerical unity of the person of Christ. It carries to extremes its denial of the dual personality maintained by the Nestorians. All vestiges of duality were banished from His being; there were not two persons: there were not even two natures. There was in Christ only the one nature of God the Word. The human nature at the incarnation was absorbed into the divine. It no more has substantive existence than has the world in a pantheistic system. This is monism in terms of personality. Its presuppositions are those of a mind imbued with an all-powerful feeling for unity. It is faced with the problem of reconciling God and the world in the person of Jesus

Christ. It brings to that problem a prejudice against the real being and the real value of the world. Hence it is led to draw the false conclusion that humanity, which is part of the world, is not a permanent element in the highest truth ; that even perfect humanity, humanity representative of all that is noblest in the race, cannot be allowed true existence in the Ideal.

Monism abandons the universal relation by abandoning one or other of the terms to be related. Monophysitism cuts a similar knot in a similar fashion. It jettisons redemption by excluding from the Redeemer all kinship with that which He came to redeem. Nominally admitting human nature into union with deity, it destroys the reality of that transaction at a stroke by making the two natures identical. So the incarnation, for the monophysite, becomes a myth ; no change in the nature of the Logos took place at it, and, consequently, no change in the nature of the Man Christ Jesus.

We may trace the likeness between the cosmic and the Christological problems still further. Monism is forced to attempt to give some account of the world's apparent reality. Similarly monophysitism had to try to explain those facts of Christ's life which on the face of the Gospel narrative are human and normal. The explanation offered is essentially the same in both systems. The monist asserts that the world exists only in the mind of the thinker. It

is an illusion of the senses. The duty of the philosopher is to overcome the illusion by turning away from the world of sense and fixing his mind on true being ; by ascesis and contemplation he endeavours to attain the ecstatic state, in which the illusion of the world's reality disappears, and the potential identity of man with the universal spirit becomes actualised in experience. Similarly, for the monophysite, the humanity of Christ was a creation of the senses. Christ's body was a phantom, and His human mind simply an aspect of Him. They were impressions left on the minds of His contemporaries. Having no substantive existence, no reality in fact, they were to be ignored in Christological dogma. They were not to be considered as part of the true Christ ; they were not to be worshipped. No spiritual value attached to them. They were hindrances rather than helps to the religion that aimed at entire abandonment of self and absorption in the divine.

The Third Solution of the Cosmic Problem —Identity in Difference

We come now to the third and last solution of the cosmic problem. As we develop it, we shall endeavour to show that it supplies that metaphysical idea which forms the basis of catholic Christology. The two previous solutions

failed. They do not satisfy the philosopher and they mislead the theologian. The one separates God from the world; the other merges them. Thus both, in effect, abandon the original enterprise. They destroy the relation instead of expressing it. The concepts both of co-existence and of identity have proved fruitless in the speculative problem, and in Christology have given rise to heresy. The third school of thought takes as its starting point neither God, nor the world, nor the two as co-existing, but the relation of the two. It makes that relation such that the terms related are preserved in the relation. Neither identity nor difference is the full truth, but identity in and through difference. God is not the world, nor is the world God. God is, and the world is. Each are facts. In their separateness they are not true facts. It is only as we conceive the two in their oneness, a supra-numerical oneness, that we can give their full value to each. The world is God's world; therefore it has being and value. The cosmic relation then is expressed not by an "and," nor by an "is," but by an "of." The God "*of*" the world is the key concept that unlocks the doors of the palace of truth.

It was in the prominence given to this concept that Aristotle's system made a great advance on that of his predecessor. Plato had established a world of ideas with the idea of the Good as its centre, but he left it unrelated to the world of

experience. Aristotle insisted on relating the ideal and the real. His concept of relation was that of form and matter. The world apart from God is matter apart from form. It has only potential reality. When it becomes united to its form, it becomes actual. Its form makes it a fact—what it has in it to be. Aristotle conceives different grades of being. Unformed matter is the lowest of these grades, and God the highest. Each grade supplies the matter of which the next highest grade is the form. Ascending the scale of being at last we reach pure form. Thus the ladder of development is constructed by which the world rises to its realisation in God. Aristotle gave to humanity the conception of a God who transcends the world, and yet is immanent in it, as form is in matter. Thus Greek philosophy in Aristotle attained that spiritual monotheism which supplied the foundation for the edifice of Christian doctrine.

The effect of Aristotle's teaching was felt by all the ecclesiastical parties in the fifth century. As we shall see in a later chapter, some of the subsidiary elements of his philosophy are reflected in monophysitism. The dominant ideas, however, of the system, the conception of God and the world and the relation between them, were taken over by the catholic theologians, and incorporated into their Christology. We need not here inquire whether Aristotle's influence

was direct or indirect. No doubt many of the theologians who constructed Christian doctrine had read his works. Whether that is so or not, they must have unconsciously assimilated his central doctrine. It was common property. The determination to keep God a reality and the world a reality and yet relate the two became the controlling motive of their thinking.

Aristotle in theory and application of theory has always a feeling for fact. The individual thing and the world of individual things are, for him, never negligible. Realised matter, life, the human spirit, human nature, are actualities and have their value as such. They are not all on the same level of being; they do not occupy the same rank; and it is the philosopher's business to determine their respective positions in the scale of being and value. But he cannot have his head in the clouds of contemplation, unless he have his feet on the earth of fact.

The Essence of Catholic Christology

Catholic Christology has caught the spirit of Aristotle's teaching. It is not primarily speculative. It is in close touch with fact. It is the outcome of a deep-felt want. Redemption is the first demand of religious experience; so it is the motive and theme of all Christology. The soul views itself as a member of a world of souls estranged from God, and for its own peace and

welfare seeks to effect a union between God and the world. Such a union, to be effective, must preserve the being and value of the world. If there were no world or only a valueless world, there would be nothing to redeem, or nothing worth redeeming. Seeking that union in personality, and in the most marvellous personality of history, the orthodox theologians by a true instinct ascribed to Him both divine and human natures. He is the cosmic unity of opposites. His person is the cosmic relation. In that person the lower term of the relation has true being and full value. Thus the Church steered a middle course between the Scylla of co-existence and the Charybdis of identity.

These *a priori* deductions as to the being of Christ were verified by a reference to fact. The life-story of the historic Christ comprises two distinct groups of experience. There are thoughts, deeds, and words attributed to Him that only God could have thought, done, and said. There are as well thoughts, deeds and words of His that only a man could have thought, done and said. Hence the diphysite doctrine was verified *a posteriori*. Again, in both groups of experience there is a never-failing connecting link. There is a unity lying deeper in His consciousness than the duality. Christ, the Agent, is the same in both parts. Whether as God or man, He is never out of character. Hence the unity of the person also

was established *a posteriori*. Thus, to the orthodox Christologians, the expectation that the human Ideal would be a unity, comprising divinity and humanity, was justified by historical fact.

They found a further verification on applying the test of practice. Orthodox Christology satisfies the requirements of the soul. Man's chief spiritual need is access to God through "a daysman that might lay his hand upon both." An exemplar, even though perfect, is not adequate to his need. The *unio mystica* can only be experienced by the leisured few. Man demands a religion of redemption, a redemption that allows value to labour, to endeavour, to human thought, that recognises the reality of pain and sorrow and sin, a redemption that redeems humanity in all its phases and in the wealth of its experiences. An Agent that has not shared to the full those experiences is useless for the purpose. Redemption must be the work of One who knows God and knows man, of One who has the touch of sympathy; for to such a touch alone can humanity respond. The Christology that makes Christ Jesus consubstantial with God and with man satisfies man's deep-felt need.

Summary of the Chapter

We have taken a triad of ontologies and a triad of Christological systems, placed them

side by side, and examined them. The result of that examination is a triple correspondence. The metaphysical principle is found in each case worked out in a corresponding Christology. The comparison is of general interest. It reveals Christology as intimately connected with the workings of intellect, as in the main stream of the current of human thought, as capable of philosophic treatment. Further than that, the comparison is vital to the main argument of this essay. It provides the clue to the heart of our subject. The scientist, who wishes to understand a botanical specimen, pays as much attention to what is in the ground as to what is above ground. The seed and roots are as full of scientific interest as are stem, leaf and flower. Similarly, to understand the monophysite heresy, to be able to detect it and expose it, we must take it in the germ. We may push the illustration further. The properties of a botanical specimen are best studied in connection with organisms of allied species. We cannot isolate unless we compare. By comparison the essential features, functions and properties of the specimen under examination are elucidated.

It is by isolating the three germinal ideas of these three Christological systems and comparing them, that a full comprehension of monophysitism in all its stages, from seed to flower, is reached. We have used this method, and have found that the roots of the heresy

lie in spiritual monism. In subsequent chapters we shall analyse its origins as a historical system, its specific tenets and its practical consequences. It will then be seen that the spirit of monism pervades the whole system.

CHAPTER II

THE ORIGINS OF MONOPHYSITISM

THE monophysitism of the fifth century had its roots in the past as well as in the *a priori*. In the previous chapter we treated it as a phase of philosophic thought and reviewed the metaphysic on which the heresy rests. In the present chapter its relations as a historical system of religious thought are to be exhibited. As such, it owes much to outside influences. Much in the monophysite mode of thought and many of its specific doctrines can be traced either to other ecclesiastical heresies or to pagan philosophies. The fact of this double derivation deserves to be emphasised. It refutes the charge of inquisitorial bigotry, so frequently levelled against the theologians of the early centuries. The non-Christian affinities of the heresy account for the bitterness of the controversy to which it gave rise, and, in large measure, excuse the intolerance shown by both parties. Heresies were not domestic quarrels. Contemporaries viewed them as involving a life

and death struggle between believers and unbelievers. Christianity can afford to be tolerant to-day. It has an assured position. Its tenets are defined. Christians can almost always distinguish at a glance errors that threaten the essentials of the Faith from those that do not. In the fourth and fifth centuries the case was otherwise. Christianity was then one among many conflicting systems of religion. Its intellectual bases were as yet only imperfectly thought out. Any doctrinal error seemed capable of poisoning the whole body of belief. Heresy, so the orthodox held, was of the devil. No charitable view of it was allowable. That uncompromising attitude was, to a large extent, justified because many articles of the heretical creeds were of purely pagan origin. Given similar conditions to-day, our easy tolerance of opinion would disappear. If Islam, for instance, were to-day a serious menace to the Faith, Christians would automatically stiffen their attitude towards monophysite doctrines. Toleration of the false Christology would, under those circumstances, be treason to the true. The Church of the fifth century was menaced from many sides. Monophysitism was the foe at her gates. That heresy was not a variety of Christianity. It was a semi-pagan theosophy, a product of Greek and oriental, as well as of purely Christian speculation; therefore it was anathema to the orthodox.

THE ORIGINS OF MONOPHYSITISM

The Elemental Forms of Christological Error—Docetism and Ebionitism

We propose to begin the study of the antecedents of monophysitism by examining those of a Christian or semi-Christian character. For that purpose it will be necessary to give a brief sketch of the early heresies in so far as they bear on the Christological problem.

The two primitive forms of doctrinal error, to which the Church, even in apostolic days, was exposed, were docetism and ebionitism. These are the elemental heresies. All the later Christological heresies are refinements of one or other of these two. They constitute the extremes of Christological thought: between them runs the *via media* of orthodoxy. Each of the two sees but one aspect of the two-fold life of Christ. Docetism lays an exclusive emphasis on His real divinity, ebionitism on His real humanity. Each mistakes a half truth for a whole truth.

The docetists denied that Jesus Christ had come in the flesh. His body, they taught, was an apparition. He ate and drank, but the physical frame received no sustenance. He appeared to suffer, but felt no pain. The reality behind the semblance was the divine spirit-being, who conjured up the illusion in order to elevate the thoughts of mankind. This docetic theory commended itself to many of the Greek

Christians. They were familiar with the notion of "the gods coming down to them in the likeness of men." Greek mythology abounds in instances of docetic incarnations. The gods of the popular religion constantly assumed visible form during their temporary manifestations.

The ebionites threatened the Faith from the opposite quarter. They taught that Christ was real man and only man. According to them, the whole value of His life and work lay in His moral teaching and His noble example; there is no mystery, no contact of divine and human in Christ; what He attained, we all may attain. The ebionites were recruited from the Jewish element in the Church. The rigid monotheism of the Jews made it hard for them to conceive an intermediary between God and man; they were naturally disposed to embrace a humanistic explanation of Christ.

Docetism was elaborated by Valentinus, Manes and other gnostics and adopted into their systems, while ebionitism provided the basis for the Christologies of Paul of Samosata, of the Photinians and Adoptionists. In contact with these heresies orthodox beliefs, originally fluid, gradually hardened. The dogma "Christus deus et homo" had from the beginning been held in the Church. Its full implications were not realised and formulated until the conflict with error came. The controversies of the third and fourth centuries threw into bold relief the unity

of the person and the perfection of the divinity and of the humanity.

The Problem of the Hypostatic Union

The manner of the hypostatic union then became an urgent problem. The Church of the fifth century was called upon to attempt a solution. Any reading of the Gospels compelled the recognition of divine and human elements in Christ; but speculative theology found it difficult to reconcile that fact with the equally important fact of the unity of person.

The theologians of the previous century had bequeathed little or no guidance. The fifth-century Christologians were pioneers in an unmapped region. Athanasius' great treatises on the incarnation are hardly more than eloquent defences of the true deity and true humanity of Christ. They contain little or no constructive Christology. Their theme is, *αὐτὸς ἐνηνθρώπησεν, ἵνα ἡμεῖς θεωποιηθῶμεν.* He maintains the fact, but does not deal with the "how." He uses the phrase "natural union" (*ἕνωσις φυσική*), but does not attempt to define the mode of that union.

Apollinarianism

Apollinaris was, as far as we know, the first theologian to approach this subject. We may

note in passing that, though he was bishop of Laodicea in Syria, Alexandria was his native place. His father was an Alexandrian, and he himself had been a friend of Athanasius. The fact of his connection with Alexandria deserves mention, because his doctrine reflects the ideas of the Alexandrian school of thought, not those of the Syrian. Apollinaris set himself to attack the heretical view that there were two "Sons" —one before all time, the divine Logos, and one after the incarnation, Jesus Christ. In doing so he felt constrained to formulate a theory of the union of natures. He started from the Platonic division of human nature into three parts, rational soul, animal soul, and body. He argued that in the statement "the Logos became flesh," "flesh" must mean animal soul and body. He urged in proof that it would be absurd to suppose the Logos conditioned by human reason; that rational soul was the seat of personality, and that if it were associated with the Logos, it would be impossible to avoid recognising "two Sons." He expressly asserted that the humanity of Christ was incomplete, contending that this very defect in the human nature made possible the unity of His person. According to Apollinaris, then, the union was a composition. The Logos superseded the human reason, and was thus united to body and animal soul.

Apollinarianism was a form of docetism.

In ascribing imperfection to the human nature of Christ it *eo ipso* denied its reality. Apollinaris, in fact, said of Christ's reason what the early docetists said of His body. The system is more ingenious than convincing. It is highly artificial. It provides no intellectual basis for a living faith in an incarnate Christ. The theory, however, was very influential in its day, and was intimately connected with the rise of monophysitism. Eutyches, the "father of the monophysites," was condemned by a local synod at Constantinople in A.D. 448 on the ground that he was "affected by the heresy of Valentinus and Apollinaris." * Harnack goes so far as to say that "the whole position of the later monophysites, thought out to all its conceivable conclusions, is already to be found in Apollinaris." Apollinarianism was condemned at the second general council, and there the Church made her first declaration, a negative one, on the subject of the hypostatic union. In conflict with the heresies which arose in the next two generations, she evolved a positive statement of the truth.

The Nestorian Reaction

Opposition to Apollinarianism gave rise to the Nestorian heresy. The original ebionitism had died away, but its spirit and central doctrine

* Harnack, "History of Dogma," vol. iv. chap. ii. p. 160.

reappeared in Nestorianism. Nestorianism might be described as ebionitism conforming to the creeds of Nicæa and Constantinople. The leaders of the opposition to the Apollinarists of the fifth century were their own Syrian countrymen whose headquarters was at Antioch. The Antiochians differed from the Apollinarians in the starting-point of their Christology and in the controlling motive of their thought. While Apollinaris had constructed his Christology on the basis of the doctrine of the Trinity, the Antiochians started from the formula "perfect alike in deity and humanity." The reasonings of Apollinaris were governed by the thought of redemption. The fundamental question of religion for him was, "How can the closest union between divine and human be secured?" The tendency of the Antiochians, on the other hand, was to neglect the interests of Soteriology and to emphasize the ethical aspect of Christ's life and teaching. They put in the background the idea of the all-creating, all-sustaining Logos, who took man's nature upon Him and in His person deified humanity. Their thought centred on the historic Christ, the Christ of the evangelists. They did not revert to crude ebionitism, but they explained the Nicene creed from an ebionitic stand-point. They maintained as against the Apollinarians the completeness of Christ's human nature; with equal vigour they maintained the essential deity of the Logos.

The "poverty" (ebionitism) of their doctrines consisted in their paltry view of the hypostatic union. The union, according to the Nestorians, was subsequent to the conception of Jesus. It was not a personal, but a moral union. It was a conjunction of two co-ordinate entities. They taught that the more the man Jesus acted in accordance with the divine promptings, the closer became his union with the Logos. That is to say, the union was relative not absolute. Thus the union between divine and human in Christ differed only in degree from the union of the same elements in any good man. The unity of the Son of God and the Son of Mary consisted solely in the identity of name, honour and worship.

Cyril of Alexandria

Cyril, Bishop of Alexandria, led the opposition to Nestorius. He declared that the moment of conception was the moment of the union, and that the notion of incarnation involved much more than an association of natures. He maintained that the incarnation was a hypostatic union (ἕνωσις φυσική). He endeavoured to guard against an Apollinarian interpretation of his teaching; but in this attempt he was not altogether successful. He asserted the perfection of Christ's humanity and the distinction between the two natures. The perfection,

however, is compromised, and the distinction rendered purely ideal by his further statement that there were "two natures before, but only one after the union." He cited in proof the words of Athanasius, "one incarnate nature of God the Word."

Cyril prevailed. Nestorius was condemned and the Antiochian school discredited. Cyril's victory, however, was of doubtful value to orthodoxy. His ardent but unbalanced utterances bequeathed to the Church a legacy of strife. His writings, particularly the earlier ones, furnished the monophysites with an armoury of weapons. His teaching could not with justice be styled docetic or Apollinarian, but its mystic tone was so pronounced that it proved a propædeutic for monophysitism. The shibboleth of orthodoxy, quoted above, "one incarnate nature of God the Word," passed rapidly into the watchword of heresy. Athanasius had used the word "nature" in a broad sense. The monophysites narrowed it down to its later technical meaning. Thus they exalted Christ into a region beyond the ken of mortal man. The incarnation became a mystery pure and simple, unintelligible, calling for blind acceptance. The monophysites, following Cyril, heightened the mystery, but, in doing so, they eliminated the reality and the human appeal of the incarnate life. They soon began to argue that, since Christ is monophysite, the properties

of deity and humanity in Him are interchangeable ; that therefore, while yet a Babe in the manger, He ruled the world with the omniscience and omnipresence of the Logos ; that while He hanged upon the Cross, His mighty power sustained and ordered the universe. The monophysites professed great jealousy for the honour due to the Redeemer. But the ascription of such attributes to Jesus Christ detracts from His honour. If the nature that suffered on the Cross be not distinct from the nature that cannot suffer, then the Crucifixion was a sham. Monophysitism is docetism elaborated. It abandons the Christ of history. It rules out His προκοπή. It ignores a fact, vital to Christology, namely the κένωσις or divine self-limitation. Thus it throws a veil of unreality over those facts on which the Christian Faith is built.

Monophysitism a Product of Positive and Negative Currents of Religious Thought

The foregoing sketch of the early Christological heresies exhibits monophysitism as a product of two opposite intellectual currents. A man's convictions are settled for him partly by acceptance, partly by rejection of what tradition offers or his mind evolves. The mass mind works similarly. It accepts and rejects, approves and disallows. The stabilisation of a body of mass opinions, such as a heresy, is thus

determined by opposite forces. It was so with monophysitism. Its Christian antecedents comprised positive and negative currents. The positive current was docetism, the negative ebionitism. Docetism, originating in apostolic times, passed through many phases, to provide, at the end of the fourth century, in its most refined form, Apollinarianism, the immediate positive cause of monophysitism. Ebionitism, related to docetism as realism to idealism, possessed equal vitality and equal adaptability. It showed itself in various humanistic interpretations of Christ. Of these the most elaborate was Nestorianism, which exerted the most insistent and immediate negative influence on the early growth of monophysitism.

Monophysitism and Non-Christian Thought

We leave here the subject of the influence of other heresies on monophysitism, and proceed to exhibit its affinities with non-Christian thought. At Alexandria, the home of the heresy, two systems of philosophy, the Aristotelian and the Neo-Platonist, were strongly represented. Both of these philosophies exercised a profound influence upon the origins and upon the later developments of monophysite doctrine. We propose to take, first, the Aristotelian, and then the Neo-Platonist philosophy, elucidating those leading ideas in each on which the monophysite

thinker would naturally fasten, as lending intellectual support to his religious views.

The Aristotelian Logic

Aristotle was held in high estimation by the monophysite leaders, particularly in the sixth and seventh centuries. His works were translated into Syriac in the Jacobite schools. The West owes much to these translations. For it was largely by this agency that his metaphysic reached the Arabs, who transmitted it to the West in the Middle Ages.

The Aristotelian logic was widely known among the monophysites. It seems to have formed part of their educational curriculum. Taken apart from the rest of the system, the logic produces a type of mind that revels in subtle argumentation. It exalts the form of thought at the expense of the matter. It had this effect on the monophysite theologians. They were trained dialecticians. They were noted for their controversial powers, for their constant appeal to definition, for the mechanical precision of their arguments. These mental qualities, excellent in themselves, do not conduce to sound theology. Formal logic effects clarity of thought often at the expense of depth. It treats thoughts as things. Procedure, that is proper in the sphere of logic, is out of place in psychology and theology. Concepts such as

person and nature must be kept fluid, if they are not to mislead. If they are made into hard and fast ideas, into sharply defined abstractions, they will be taken to represent discrete psychic entities, external to one another as numbers are. The elusive, Protean character of the interpenetrating realities behind them will be lost to view. The most signal defect of monophysite method is its unquestioning submission to the Aristotelian law of contradiction. The intellectual training that makes men acute logicians disqualifies them for dealing with the living subject. The monophysite Christologians were subtle dialecticians, but the psychology of Christ's being lay outside their competence.

Aristotle's Criticism of Dualism—a Weapon in the Hands of the Monophysites

Leaving the formal element in Aristotle's system, we come to its material content. Some of the prominent ideas of the Aristotelian cosmology and psychology reappear in the heresy we are studying. We shall take first the rejection of the Platonic dualism. Aristotle's repeated criticism of his master's theory of ideas is not merely destructive. It formed the starting-point for his own metaphysic. The ideas, he says, simply duplicate the world of existent things. They do not create things or move them; they do not explain genesis or process; they merely co-exist with the ideates. The participation

which Plato's later theory postulated is inadequate. A more intimate relation is required. The theory of ideas confronts God with a world, and leaves the relation between them unformulated and inexplicable.

This criticism is of first importance for theology. Faith as well as reason demands a real relation between idea and ideate. The Christian student in the fifth century, familiar with Aristotle's criticism of Plato, would inevitably apply it in Christology. Any theory of redemption that ascribed duality to the Redeemer would seem to him to be open to the objections that Aristotle had urged against the theory of ideas. The Nestorian formula, in effect, juxtaposed the ideal Christ and the real Jesus, and left the two unrelated. This was Platonism in Christology. Aristotle's attack on Plato's system provided a radical criticism of Nestorianism. The monophysite theologians were blind to the difference between the Nestorian position and that of the orthodox. They saw that Aristotle had placed a powerful weapon in their hands, and they used it indifferently against both opposing parties.

Aristotle's Psychology

We turn now to Aristotle's psychology. We must give a brief sketch of it in order to establish the fact that the Aristotelian and the monophysite science of the soul labour under the same

defect. It is a radical defect, namely, the almost complete absence of the conception of personality. The principle of Aristotle's psychology, like that of his metaphysic, is the concept of form and matter. The soul of man comes under the general ontological law. All existence is divisible into grades, the lower grade being the matter whose form is constituted by the next highest grade. Thus there is a graduated scale of being, starting from pure matter and rising to pure form. The inorganic is matter for the vegetable kingdom, the vegetable kingdom for the animal kingdom; the nutritive process is material for the sensitive, and the sensitive for the cognitive. Man is an epitome of these processes. The various parts of his nature are arranged in an ascending scale; form is the only cohesive force. The animal soul is the form of the body, born with it, growing with it, dying with it; the two are one in the closest union conceivable. Besides the soul of the body, there is, says Aristotle, a soul of the soul. This is reason, essentially different from animal and sensitive soul. It is not connected with organic function. It is pure intellectual principle. It is immaterial, immortal, the divine element in man. This reason is not a bare unity. As it appears in human experience, it is not full-grown. Potentially it contains all the categories, but the potentiality must be actualised. Consequently reason subdivides into active and

passive intellect. The action of the former on the latter, and the response of the latter to the former, constitute the development of the mind, the education of the truth that is potentially present from the beginning.

This hierarchy of immaterial entities contains nothing corresponding to our idea of personality. There is in it no principle that is both individual and immortal. Aristotle allows immortality only to the universal reason. The psychic elements are condemned to perish with the body. There is no hope for the parts of the soul which are most intimately connected with the individual's experience.

Monophysite Christology shares this fundamental defect. The monophysite thinker attempted to express the union of two natures within one experience. But his psychology, not containing the notion of personality, could furnish no principle of synthesis. An agent in the background of life, to combine the multiplicity of experience, is a *sine qua non* of a sound Christology. Personality was to the monophysites a *terra incognita;* and it was in large measure their devotion to Aristotle's system that made them deaf to the teaching of the catholic church.

Intellectualism and Mysticism Complementary Systems

After this sketch of the Aristotelian features recognisable in monophysitism, we turn to the

other great pagan philosophy that assisted in the shaping of the heresy. Intellectualism and mysticism are closely allied; the two are complementary; they are as mutually dependent as are head and heart. It is not then surprising that monophysitism should possess the characteristics of both these schools of thought. The intellectualism of the heresy was largely due, as we have shown, to the Aristotelian logic and metaphysic; its mystic elements derive, as we proceed to indicate, from Neo-Platonism and kindred theosophies.

Alexandria had been for centuries the home of the mystics. The geographical position, as well as the political circumstances of its foundation, destined that city to be the meeting-place of West and East. There the wisdom of the Orient met and fought and fused with that of the Occident. There Philo taught, and bequeathed to the Neo-Platonists much of his Pythagorean system. There flourished for a while and died fantastic eclectic creeds, pagan theosophies masquerading as Christianity. Gnosticism was a typical product of the city. Valentinus and Basilides and the other gnostics made in that cosmopolitan atmosphere their attempts to reconcile Christianity with Greek and oriental thought. There Ammonius Saccas, after his lapse from the Christian faith, taught and laid the foundation of Neo-Platonism. Plotinus was the greatest of his disciples, and,

though he taught at Rome for most of his life, it was in the spirit of Alexandria that he wrought his absolute philosophy, the full-orbed splendour of the setting sun of Greek thought. Neo-Platonism did not die with Plotinus. In the middle of the fifth century, when monophysitism was at its zenith, Proclus was fashioning an intellectual machinery to express the Plotinian system. The story of Hypatia evidences the dominant position of Neo-Platonism in Alexandrian culture. The violence of Cyril's measures against her shows what a menace to the Church that philosophy was. Cyril was not a monophysite, but much that he said and did promoted their cause. Dioscurus, his nephew and successor in the see of Alexandria, championed monophysitism at the council of Chalcedon. In later generations Alexandria always offered an asylum to exiled monophysite leaders.

These facts render it impossible to regard the connection between Alexandria and monophysitism as fortuitous. They further suggest that Neo-Platonism was the connecting link. Such in fact it was. Monophysitism, we might almost say, was Neo-Platonism in Christian dress. The ethos of the two systems is the same, and the doctrinal resemblance is marked. It was natural that the home of pagan mysticism should cradle the kindred system of heretical Christian mysticism.

Neo-Platonist Ontology

The representative figure amongst the Neo-Platonists is Plotinus. His comprehensive mind gathered up the main threads of Alexandrian thought, and wove them into the fabric of a vast speculative system. The system is as much a religion as a philosophy. It is the triumph of uncompromising monism. The last traces of dualism have been eradicated. God, for Plotinus, is true being and the only being. He is all and in all. God is an impersonal Trinity, comprising the One, the cosmic reason and the cosmic soul. The One is primal, ineffable, behind and beyond all human experience. All we know of Him is that He is the source and union of reason and soul. Creation is effected by a continuous series of emanations from God. Emanation is not an arbitrary act of divine will; it is a necessary consequence of the nature of the One. God must negate Himself, and the process is creation. The further the process of negation is carried, the less reality does the created object possess. Last in the scale comes matter, which has no self-subsistence, but is the absolute self-negation of God. We referred in the last chapter to Plotinus' favourite illustration. We may be allowed, perhaps, to repeat it here. As light, he says, issues from the sun and grows gradually dimmer, until it passes by imperceptible degrees into the dark, so reason emanates from God

and, passing through the phases of nature, loses its essence gradually in its procession, until finally it is derationalised and becomes its opposite.

Neo-Platonist Psychology

Human souls are at an intermediate stage of this cosmic process. Like the ray of light which touches both sun and earth, they have contact with God and with matter. They stand midway in creation. They are attracted upwards and downwards. Reason draws them to God ; sense chains them to earth. Their position decides their duty. (Here the philosophy becomes a religion). The duty of man is to break the sensuous chains and set the soul free to return to its home in God. This return of the soul to God is attained by the path of knowledge. The knowledge that frees is not speculative ; for such enhances self-consciousness. It is immediate consciousness indistinguishable from unconsciousness. It is intuitive knowledge. It is vision in which the seer loses himself, and what sees is the same as what is seen. It is the absorption of the soul in the world reason, and so with God.

The Neo-Platonist took practical steps to attain this mystic state. He submitted to rule and discipline. By mortification of the flesh he endeavoured to weaken sensuous desire. The

arts of theurgy were employed to wean the mind from sensuous knowledge, and to fix aspiration on unseen realities. Contemplation and self-hypnotism were widely practised. In ecstasy the mystic found a foretaste of that blissful loss of being, which is the goal and crown of philosophic thought.

Monophysitism and Neo-Platonism

When we compare monophysitism with the system of Plotinus, several points of resemblance appear. There is first the impersonal character of the deity. Monophysitism was not a Trinitarian heresy, and the Catholic doctrine of the three persons in the godhead was the official creed of the heretical church. But their theologians refrained from laying emphasis upon the distinct personalities of Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Their sympathies were Sabellian to the core, and Sabellian heresies were constantly recurring within their communion. The impersonal Trinity, such as Plotinus taught, was thoroughly in keeping with their Christology. They lacked a clear conception of personality in the second Person of the Trinity. It was inevitable that they should overlook the same element in the incarnate Christ.

The Neo-Platonic view of matter finds its counterpart in monophysite theory. The monophysites, without formally denying its real

existence, nursed a Manichean suspicion of it. It was, to them, the seat of illusion ; it was an obstacle to spirit, the enemy of spiritual development. If not unreal, it was at any rate unworthy. The association of Christ with matter through His body and through His human nature was, in their eyes, a degradation of deity. That Christ took matter up into His being as a permanent element, that He dignified the body and glorified human faculties, these facts seemed to the monophysite mind improbable, and, if true, devoid of religious significance. It came natural to him to explain Christ's body as a phantom. He was prepared to regard the human nature as unsubstantial. The mystic's view of matter, of sense and human existence characterises the whole monophysite outlook.

In the spirit of Plotinus the monophysites conceived the incarnation as the supreme example of the *unio mystica*. The *unio mystica* was a state of rapture, abnormal and temporary in earthly experience, in which the identity of the mystic was actually merged in the cosmic reason. The lower nature disappeared completely into the higher. It was absorption. This word " absorption " was in common use among the heretics. It was a trite saying among the first generation of the monophysites that " the human nature of Christ was absorbed in the divine, as a drop of honey in the ocean." They conceived His thought as lost in the universal

reason, His will as surrendered to the will of God, His human affections as fused in the fire of divine feeling, His body as a phantom. They could not admit that He lived the real life of a real man. They could not see the value of such a life. Neo-Platonism had paralysed their optic nerve. Thinkers such as the Christologians of Alexandria, imbued with the spirit of Neo-Platonism, had no motive for preserving the distinct subsistence of Christ's human nature. It was their boast that their Ideal had faced and overcome and trampled on the lower elements of His being. He was a proof from fact that body and sense and all that is distinctively human could be sublimated into the universal substance, which is the primary effluence of the Plotinian One. In a word, the incarnate Christ was, to them, the personification of the Neo-Platonist *unio mystica.*

We may conclude this comparison of monophysitism with Neo-Platonism by pointing out that the two systems had a similar bearing on the conduct of life. Neo-Platonism was a religion. Its speculative aspect was subordinate to its practical. A knowledge of the soul's position in creation and of its destiny laid the philosopher under strict obligation. Fasting and self-denial were essential preliminaries to the higher mystic practices. Ecstasy could not be reached until body and sense had been starved into complete submission. Monophysitism

adopted this tradition, and made ascesis the central duty of the Christian life. The monophysite church became celebrated for the length and rigidity of its fasts. The monastic element dominated its communion. Indeed, it is hardly too much to say that the monophysite movement, on its external side, was an attempt to capture the Church for monastic principles. The heresy drew its inspiration from the cloister. The Christ of the monophysites had withdrawn from the market to the wilderness; so His followers must needs go out of the world to follow in His steps.

CHAPTER III

MONOPHYSITE DOCTRINE

THE distinctive doctrine of monophysitism, that from which the name of the heresy is taken, is the assertion that there is but one nature, the divine nature, in Christ. There existed some difference of opinion among the monophysites as to whether any degree of reality might be ascribed to the human nature. Some were prepared to allow it conceptual reality; they would grant that Christ had been diphysite momentarily, that He was "out of two natures." But that admission is quite inadequate. It amounts to no more than the paltry concession that Christ's human nature before the incarnation is conceivable as a separate entity. All monophysites united in condemning the diphysite doctrine that after the incarnation Christ was and is "in two natures." Such a Christ they would not worship. It was "the image with two faces that the Council of Chalcedon had set up." * They adopted the

* "The Chronicle of Zachariah of Mitylene," translated by Hamilton and Brooks, chap. iii. p. 46.

Athanasian phrase, "One incarnate nature of God the Word," as their battle-cry.

Monophysitism can make out a strong *prima facie* case. It is attractive at first sight. The heretical formula seems simpler and more natural than the catholic. The unity of nature appears a corollary of the unity of person. Human personality is ordinarily assumed to be monophysite; so it is natural to make the same assumption as to divine personality. The simplicity of the doctrine is, however, all on the surface. It will not bear examination. As a definition of Christian faith it is useless. It cannot account for the recorded facts of Christ's life. The facts of His body, of His mind, of His sufferings refuse to fit into it. It affords no foundation for belief in His transcendent work. No intelligible doctrine of redemption can be built upon it. It contains no germ of hope for mankind. Therefore the Church in the name of Christ and on behalf of humanity rejected it.

Although the heresy has been officially condemned, it should none the less be studied. It is improbable that any one in our time will defend the formula, or openly profess the doctrines that follow from it. But, though not recognised as such, it is an ever-present and instant menace to the Faith. Monophysite tendencies are inherent in religious thought. The metaphysical idea, on which it rests, still has a powerful hold over the human mind.

Spiritually-minded men are especially liable to this form of error. It is a mistake to think that Christological questions were settled once and for all in the fifth century. Each generation has to settle them afresh. Accordingly, to exhibit the consequences of the monophysite formula, to show how wrong abstract ideas develop into wrong concrete ideas and falsify Christian practice, is a task of practical and present-day importance.

Classification of Monophysite Errors

Two classes of erroneous beliefs result from a misconception of the relation between God and man in Christ. There arise, on the one hand, false opinions about the deity of Christ, and on the other, false opinions as to His manhood. We shall adopt this classification as we investigate the doctrinal consequences of the monophysite formula. It is the method followed in one of the earliest systematic criticisms of the heresy. Leo's Tome, or letter to Flavian, contains a lucid statement of the catholic doctrine of the incarnation, and an acute analysis of the system of Eutyches, the heresiarch. He summarises the errors of Eutyches under two heads ; there are two main counts in his indictment of the heresy. Eutyches, he contends, makes Jesus Christ " deus passibilis et homo falsus." Eutyches and his followers compromised both deity and humanity. The deity becomes passible,

the humanity unreal. All the monophysite misbeliefs can be classified under one or other of these two heads.

The Concept "Impassibility" as applied to Deity

We shall take first those errors that compromise the nature of the deity, and shall preface our analysis by an explanation of the meaning of the term "deus impassibilis." The impassibility of God is the corner-stone of spiritual monotheism. Christianity owes it, as a philosophic doctrine, largely to Aristotle. He conceived deity as "actus purus," as the One who moves without being moved, a "causa sui." The popular gods of Greece were passible; they were possible objects of sense; they were acted on largely as man is acted on. They had a beginning, and were subject to many of the processes of time. They were swayed by human motives. They were, at times, angry, afraid, unsatisfied, ambitious, jealous. Aristotle gave to the world the conception of a transcendent God, a being who is real and yet is "without body, parts and passions," who cannot receive idolatrous worship, and is not an object of sense. Impassibility was one of the highest attributes of this being. The attribute does not involve or imply absence of feeling. Originally it had no reference to feeling, in the psychological sense of that word. It certainly excludes

incidentally the lower, specifically human feelings, feelings caused by external stimuli, feelings due to want or to lack of power. It does not exclude the higher affections from the deity. Even in the *νόησις νοήσεως* of Aristotle, there is room for the transcendent bliss of divine self-contemplation. Much more in the Christian God is there room for spontaneous feeling, springing from His own nature, the necessary concomitant of thought and will. Impassibility is a comprehensive attribute. Originally negative, it soon acquired a rich positive connotation. An impassible God is one who is outside space and time. The attribute connotes creative power, eternity, infinity, permanence. A passible God is corruptible, *i.e.* susceptible to the processes of becoming, change, and decay. If to-day theists have to be on their guard against debased conceptions of deity, in the plausible garb of an "invisible king," of a finite or suffering God, much more was such caution necessary in the early centuries of the Christian era. Christians who came daily and hourly into contact with polytheistic beliefs and practices had to be very jealous for the concept of impassibility. It represented to them all that was distinctive in the highest region of their Faith.

Monophysitism, as we proceed to show, compromised this article of the Faith. Its adherents did not, perhaps, do so intentionally. In fact, the first generation of monophysites maintained

that their definition safeguarded the impassibility. It was zeal for the honour of the Son of God that induced them to deny Him all contact with humanity. Their good intentions, however, could not permanently counteract the evil inherent in their system. In later generations the evil came to the surface. Theopaschitism, the doctrine that openly denies the impassibility of the godhead, flourished in the monophysite churches.

Monism entails a Debased Conception of Deity

The metaphysical basis of monophysitism made this result inevitable. Extremes meet. Extreme spirituality readily passes into its opposite. It cuts the ground from under its own feet. It soars beyond its powers, and falls into the mire of materialism. Illustrations of this fact can be found in the history of philosophy. The Stoics, for instance, contrived to be both pantheists and materialists. Coming nearer to our own time, we find Hegelianism explained in diametrically opposite ways. After Hegel's death his disciples split into opposing camps ; one party maintained that the real was spirit, the other that it was matter. Each party claimed the authority of the master for their view. The divergence is easy to explain. From spiritual monism it is a short step to materialistic monism. For the monist, all is on one

level of being. He may by constant effort keep that level high. But gravity will act. We are more prone to degrade God to our level, than to rise to His. The same truth can be put *in abstracto.* Unless the relation between God and the world be preserved as a true relation, the higher term will sooner or later fall to the level of the lower, and be lost in it. This rule holds as well in movements of religious thought. The monophysite strove for a lofty conception of deity but achieved a low one. He undermined the doctrine of impassibility by the very measures he took to secure it.

In the technical language of Christology the monophysites' debased conception of deity was a consequence of "confounding the natures." Attributes and actions, belonging properly only to Christ's humanity, were ascribed recklessly to His divinity. The test phrase "theotokos," invaluable as a protest against Nestorianism, became a precedent for all sorts of doctrinal extravagancies. The famous addition to the Trisagion, "who wast crucified for us," which for a time won recognition as sound and catholic, was first made by the monophysite Bishop of Antioch.* Both these phrases have scriptural authority, and they are justified by the *communicatio idiomatum.* But they are liable to

* This addition to the Trisagion was officially condemned at the close of the 7th century owing to its monophysite associations.

misuse and misinterpretation. All depended on how they were said and who said them. The monophysite meant one thing by them, the catholic another. The *arrière pensée* of the monophysite gave them a wrong turn. He was always on the look-out for paradox in Christ's life. He emphasised such phrases as appeared to detract from the reality of His human experiences. He spoke of Christ as "ruling the universe when He lay in the manger," or as "directing the affairs of nations from the Cross." The catholic can approve these phrases; in the mouth of a monophysite they have a heretical sound. They suggest a passible God; they degrade the infinite to the level of the finite. The monophysite confounds the natures, and so he has no right to appeal to the *communicatio idiomatum*. Unless the *idiomata* are admitted as such, unless they are preserved in their distinctness, there can be no *communicatio* between them. If they are fused, they cannot act and react upon each other. The monophysite, by identifying the natures, forfeits the right to use the term "Theotokos" and the Trisagion addition. On his lips their inevitable implication is a finite suffering God.

Monophysitism and the Doctrine of the Trinity

Monophysitism was not originally or *per se* a Trinitarian heresy. Equally with catholics

and Nestorians its adherents accepted the Nicene definition. They professed to believe in one God in three co-equal persons. This belief, firmly held in all that it involves, would have kept them from attributing passibility to the Godhead, and ultimately have neutralised the errors of their Christology. But their Christology corrupted their theology. Abandoning all vital relation between God and man in Christ, they abandoned the relation in the Godhead. The internal and external relations of the Godhead are mutually dependent. If there be no trinity of persons, the incarnation is impossible. Were God a bare monad, He could not impart Himself and remain Himself. The fact that there are related persons in the deity is the only justification for the use of the phrases discussed in the previous paragraph. When the catholic says, "God was born, suffered, died," he is right, because his presupposition is right. When the monophysite uses the same words, he is wrong, because his presupposition is wrong. The catholic preserves in the background of his thought the distinction between the οὐσία and the threefold ὑπόστασις, between the essential godhead and the three persons. So he is in no danger of ascribing passion to the essence or to the persons of Father or Holy Spirit. When he says "God was born," he is compressing two statements into one. He means "Christ was born, and Christ was God."

Not in respect of what He has in common with the other persons of the Trinity, but in respect of His property of sonship did He lower Himself to the plane of suffering. The catholic holds not a suffering God, but a suffering divine person. He maintains an impassible God, but a passible Christ. A dead God is a contradiction in terms; a Christ who died is the hope of humanity.

Monophysite theology became involved in further embarrassments. Unwillingness to attribute passibility to God, coupled with the desire to remain in some sort trinitarians, forced many of the monophysites into the Sabellian position. Deity, they said in effect, did not suffer in the second person of the trinity, because there is no such person. The persons of the trinity are simply characters assumed by the monadic essence, or aspects under which men view it. On this showing, the Logos, who was incarnate, had no personal subsistence. The relation between God and man ever remains impersonal. Christ, *qua* divine, was only an aspect or effluence of deity. This, for the monophysite, was the one alternative to the doctrine of a passible God. He was faced with a desperate dilemma. If he retained his belief in a transcendent God, he must surrender belief in a triune God. He could choose between the two; but his Christology permitted no third choice. For him, the only alternative to a finite God was

a lone God. As a result monophysite theology oscillated between denial of the impassibility of God and denial of his three-fold personality. In either case the orthodox doctrine of the godhead was abandoned.

One of the stock questions propounded by the catholics to the monophysites was, "Was the trinity incomplete when the Son of God was on earth?" The question is crudely expressed, as it ignores the type of existence proper to spiritual personality; but it contains a sufficiently sound *ad hominem* argument. The monophysite could not say "yes," or he would then be driven to assert a passible God. If he said "no," his reply was tantamount to the assertion that the whole essence of the Godhead was incarnate. The logic of this dilemma was so cogent that not a few monophysites succumbed to it, and adopted a position similar to that of the earlier Patripassianists. These seceded from the monophysite church, and founded an independent sect, called the Theopaschites. As often happens, the sect is, doctrinally, more representative than the parent body. The Theopaschites were the thinkers who had the courage to push the monophysite doctrines to their logical conclusions. Those who did not secede, unable to defend their own doctrinal position, retaliated with the countercharge of tetratheism. This stroke was simply a confession of weakness. Monism was strangling

their Christianity at every turn. Instead of breaking free from it, they pretended that their opponents were polytheists. The catholic, however, was neither monist nor pluralist. The incarnation was not the addition of a fourth divine being to the trinity. The essence of the godhead remained complete, unchanged and impassible ; while the hypostatic union of God and man in Christ made possible the assumption of a passible nature by the person of the Son of God.

Monophysitism and Islam—Sabellianism the Connecting Link

It is in place here to point out the somewhat intimate connection that existed between monophysitism and Islam. The monophysites held the outposts of the Empire. Mahomet came into contact with them, and it was probably from them that he formed his conception of Christian doctrine. The later history of the monophysite churches shows that they often secured a large measure of toleration at the hands of the Caliphs, while the diphysites were being rigorously persecuted. Lapses to Islam were not infrequent, and in some periods apostasy on a large scale occurred. Cases are on record even of monophysite patriarchs who abjured their faith and joined the followers of the Prophet. The connection between monophysitism and Islam was not fortuitous. There

was a doctrinal affinity between them. Both systems were rigidly monotheistic. Both degraded the notion of deity by a perverse attempt to exalt it. Both cut redemption and mediation out of their religion.

The family likeness between the two systems does not extend beyond the realm of the doctrine of supreme deity. In other respects the religion of the sword and the religion of love have little or nothing in common. Crescent and Cross are poles asunder. The monophysites as a body remained nominally and in intention Christians and trinitarians. But in the doctrinal area specified the resemblance holds. It could hardly be otherwise. Sabellian tendencies were always present and powerful in the monophysite communion, and Sabellianism is a long step in the direction of Islam. Sabellius taught in effect, "Allah is one." The three persons, for him, were only aspects of the one indivisible deity. There are no distinct entities corresponding to the names of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Sabellianism is intimately associated with monism in all its phases. Monophysitism being essentially monist could not escape the taint. Whether Sabellianism made the heretics monophysites, or monophysitism made them Sabellians, we need not inquire. The two creeds are bound up in the same bundle by the tie of monism. The relation of the Son to the Father and the relation of the Son to humanity are

vitally connected. Misconception of the one relation entails misconception of the other. Denial of relation in the godhead goes hand in hand with denial of relation in Christ. If the theologian reduces the latter to bare unity, he does the same for the former. Catholic Christology is thus a necessary deduction from trinitarian dogma. Nicæa necessitated Chalcedon. To safeguard the distinction of persons in the godhead, a distinction in the natures of Christ was essential. To preserve intact the latter distinction, the proprium of the Son and His personal subsistence had to be kept distinct from the proprium and subsistence of the Father.

The Christological Errors of Monophysitism

We leave here the area of theology and come to that of Christology. We have exhibited the monophysite errors with respect to the doctrine of primal deity ; we now proceed to analyse their views with respect to the incarnate Christ. The former subject leads the thinker into deep water ; the layman is out of his depth in it ; so it does not furnish material for a popular controversy. It is otherwise with the latter subject. Here the issue is narrowed to a point. It becomes a question of fact, namely, " Was Christ a real man ? " The question and most of the answers given to it are readily intelligible, and they naturally gave rise to heated controversy.

Theopaschitism is, as we have shown, a tendency inherent in the heresy, but one slow to come to the surface, and one easily counteracted and suppressed by the personal piety of the monophysite. Its docetism, the assertion of the unreality of Christ's human nature, lies on the surface. No amount of personal piety can neutralise it. It has had, and still has, a crippling effect on the faith of devout Christians. Even where it is not carried to the length of formal heresy, it spreads a haze of unreality over the gospel story, and dulls the edge of belief.

The second count of Leo's charge against the monophysites was, it will be remembered, that their presentation of Christ made Him "homo falsus." Under this heading "homo falsus" may be classed a wide group of erroneous tenets, ranging from the crudities of early docetism to the subtleties of Apollinarianism. We propose to sketch those of major importance. No attempt will be made to take them in their historical order or historical setting. Further, it is not implied that they all formed part of the official doctrine of the monophysite church. The standard of belief in that communion was constantly varying, and the history of its dogma would need a work to itself. We shall deal with those Christological errors, which, whether part of the official monophysite creed or not, are logical results of the monophysite formula.

Unreality may be predicated of Christ's

human nature as a whole, or in respect of its parts. Consubstantiality with humanity may be denied of the whole of his human nature; or deficiency in one or other of the essential constituents of human nature may be alleged. We shall deal first with those errors that concern the entire nature, coming later to the errors in respect of one or more of its several parts.

Suspicion of the reality of Christ's human nature as a whole is characteristic of all monophysite thought. This suspicion, not always formulated or expressed, is everywhere present. If the monophysites admitted the fact of His true manhood, they denied or neglected the religious value of that fact. Their spurious spirituality rebelled against a dogma which seemed to tie the infinite down to a point in history. The fact that the Son of God lived a perfect human life contained no inspiration for them. They idealised the incarnation. It was not for them a historical event. This is a corollary to the proposition, maintained by their great champion, Philoxenus, that "no addition to His person took place." It is tantamount to saying that the union of divine and human in Christ is purely conceptual. When the monophysite faced the question, "What change in Christ did the incarnation effect?" His formula constrained him to reply, "It made no change." The deity of the person was not denied. The pre-existent Logos and the Christ

who walked in Galilee were admittedly one and the same. The second person of the trinity and Jesus of Nazareth were one personality. If Bethlehem made no change in that personality, it was purposeless, and the import of the incarnation disappears.

The Monophysite Theory of a Composition of Natures

For the consistent monophysites, then, the human nature, as a psychic entity with peculiar properties, did not survive the incarnation. They did, however, allow it a verbal reality. They admitted a composition of natures, and this composition provided for them whatever degree of reality the incarnation possessed. On this point their Christology passed through several stages of development, the later stages showing progressive improvement on the earlier. They distinguished three senses of the word "composition." First, they said, it might mean "absorption," as when a drop of water is absorbed in a jar of wine. Second, it might imply the transmutation of constituent particles, as when a third unlike thing is formed from two. Thirdly, there is composition when, from the association of two whole and entire things, a third whole and entire compound thing is formed without loss to the components. They illustrated the third mode of composition by the union in man of soul and body. The

pre-Eutychian monophysites regarded the hypostatic union as a composition in the first sense of the word. They spoke of Christ's human nature as absorbed in the divine, as is "a drop of vinegar in the ocean." Eutyches adopted the term in its second sense. He taught that the Word became flesh * "as the atmosphere assumes bodily form and becomes rain or snow under the influence of the wind, and as water becomes ice by reason of the cold air." Philoxenus in a later generation saw that both these positions were wrong and the similes misleading. He taught a hypostatic union totally devoid of confusion or loss or commutation of the elements of the two natures. To illustrate his meaning he used the simile supplied by the "Athanasian" creed, "as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man, so God and Man is one Christ." This position is a vast improvement on that of the original monophysites. It was ground gained to secure the admission that in any sense Christ was very man. But the monophysites never learned the true manner of the union, namely, that Christ was "one; not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh, but by taking of the Manhood into God; one altogether; not by confusion of Substance but by unity of Person."

Read in this connection the assertion that

* "Chronicle of Zachariah of Mitylene," translated by Hamilton and Brooks, ii. 2, p. 21.

God and man is one Christ, "as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man," is orthodox; read apart from this context, it is ambiguous. If the simile be kept as a simile, as a mere suggestion or hint as to how, in general, two may compose one and yet remain two, then no exception can be taken to it. If, however, the clause be interpreted as a proportion sum, assigning corresponding values to the different terms, then it savours strongly of Apollinarianism. Most monophysites, like many moderns, probably understood it in the mathematical sense. Christ, they argued, was God and man, just as man is rational soul and body; the terms are in proportion; therefore the divine nature was the rational soul, and the human nature was the body. They forgot that the free act of the whole divine person in assuming man underlies the union and makes it efficacious; they gave σάρξ the narrow meaning of σῶμα; they set before themselves the picture, not of the infinite robing in the finite, but of the union of mind and matter. Consequently they habitually spoke of the Logos, as assuming, not man or a human nature, but a body.

Such in its varying phases was the monophysite doctrine of composition. At its worst, it contained a direct denial of the real humanity of Christ. At its best, it falls far short of the catholic doctrine of His real, perfect and complete humanity. The permanent assumption of

human nature into the transcendent personality had no meaning for the heretic party. If it had taken place, it was, they thought, merely momentary, with no after-effects, the passing of a summer cloud across the face of the sun.

We have considered the monophysites' view of Christ's human nature, regarded as an integral psychic entity. It is evident that they either undervalued it or denied its existence. The more consistent thinkers of their party maintained that the incarnation had made no difference in the being of Christ, and that therefore His human nature had no objective reality. Those who shrank from carrying the doctrine to that length conceded to the orthodox that the incarnation had to some extent modified the being of Christ, that its net result was a composition. Further analysis showed that this concession was rendered nugatory; that in whatever sense the word "composition" was taken, it was inadequate to express the hypostatic union; that the composition proved in its first significance illusory, in its second, hybridous, in its third, Apollinarianist. We pass on now to review the human nature in its constituent parts, and it will be seen that the heretical formula undermines faith in respect of each several part.

The "Parts" of Human Nature

From the standpoint of psychology human nature is divisible into parts. The division must

not be taken as absolute; for the whole is a unity, and the parts are not discrete *quanta*. The division is rather a classification of psychic states according to predominating features. The classification corresponds, however, to the facts of experience, and so psychology is justified in making use of it. We shall adopt it in our investigation of the psychology of Christ. The sharpest dividing line is that between immaterial and material, between soul and body. The states of the soul fall into three well-marked groups, thought, will, and feeling. The physical and the psychic are not always distinguishable. Still more uncertain and tentative is the identification in the psychic of cognitive, volitional, and emotional faculties. But in every man these parts are found. They are constituents of human nature. There may be other elements as yet unanalysed; but there can be no complete humanity that is deficient in respect of any of these parts. We propose to take them singly in the above order, to show their existence in the historic Christ, and to expose the monophysite attempts to explain them away.

Christ's Body

It is obvious to an unprejudiced reader of the gospels that Christ's pre-resurrection body was real and normal. It was an organism of flesh and blood, of the same constitution and structure

as ours. It occupied space, and was ordinarily subject to the laws of space. It was visible and tangible. It shared the natural processes of birth, growth, and metabolism. At the resurrection a catastrophic change took place in it. It was still a body. It was still Christ's body. Continuity was preserved. The evidences of continuity were external, and so strong as to convince doubters. We cannot fathom either the change or the continuity. What we know is that after the resurrection the body was not so subject as before to the laws of space. It was, it would seem, of finer atoms and subtler texture. It had reached the height of physical being, and development apparently had ceased. It was the entelechy of the human body. It was still real, though no longer normal. To employ paradox, it was natural of the species "supernatural." It was the natural body raised to a higher power. It was natural to human denizens of a higher world. Body's function is two-fold. It both limits the soul and expresses it. It narrows the activity of the person to a point, and thus serves as a fine instrument for action upon matter. At the same time it draws out the potentialities of the soul and fixes its development. The post-resurrection body was apparently less limitative and more expressive.

The foregoing considerations may be summed up in the form of three dogmata, all of which orthodox Christianity teaches. These are, first,

that Christ's pre-resurrection body was real and natural; second, that His resurrected and ascended body is real and supernatural; third, that there was a real continuity, whether by development or by epigenesis between the two. In all these points the monophysites missed the truth. Their presuppositions misled them. As monists they were inclined to regard matter as sinful. They could not conceive the infinite donning a soiled robe. "Our body with its hateful wants" could not, they thought, be a tabernacle for the Logos. The idea of the native dignity of the human frame and of its being ennobled by the King's indwelling was completely foreign to the monophysites' ways of thinking.

Since such was the background of their thought it was inevitable that definitely heretical doctrines should result. In the first place we meet the flat denial of the reality of Christ's body. Even in apostolic days those who held this heresy were found. They denied that Christ had come in the flesh. They were styled docetists or phantasiasts. According to them the body had no objective reality. It was a phantom. Its reality was entirely subjective. It was the effect produced on the perceptions of those who associated with the mysterious spirit-being. The Logos, as viewed by the phantasiasts, at the incarnation struck His being into the bounds of time, but not of space. Divine

personality, they thought, did not require and could not use a material medium. This doctrine was not part of the official monophysite creed; but, as pointed out in the previous chapter, monophysitism was a lineal descendant of docetism, and always showed traces of its lineage. The saying that, "Christ brought His body from heaven," was commonly attributed to Eutyches. He denied having said it, but, at any rate, the general feeling of his followers was that Christ's physical nature was divine and therefore not consubstantial with ours.

Such doctrines destroy the discipline of faith in the resurrection. The radical difference between the natural and the resurrection body is blurred by them. The immense change is abolished. The resurrection becomes purely a spiritual change, which even a non-Christian could accept. The body, according to the tenor of monophysite teaching, was spirit before the resurrection and spirit after it. Thus the ascension too becomes purely spiritual. It is shorn of half its significance. The Christian's hope for the human body rests on the fact that Christ returned to heaven with something that He did not bring from heaven, namely, a glorified human body. If He brought that body with Him from heaven, the main significance of His human dispensation falls to the ground. The incarnation becomes unreal, illusory, impotent.

An offshoot of docetism that flourished

among the monophysites is the aphthartodocetic heresy. This is of considerable historical importance. Large numbers of the Syrian and Egyptian monophysites embraced it, and seceded from the parent church. It became part of the official creed of Armenian Christianity, and that church has not repudiated it to this day. There are good, though hardly conclusive, grounds for holding that the emperor Justinian, profound theologian and life-long champion of orthodoxy, was converted to the heretical theory in the last few months of his life.* Aphthartodocetism, affirming the reality of Christ's body, denies that it was subject to the wear and tear of life. The body, as this heresy taught, was superior to natural process ; it was neither corrupted nor corruptible. The term "corruptibility" has the wide significance of organic process, that is the lot of all created living things. A milder form of the heresy asserted that Christ's body was corruptible but was not corrupted. Aphthartodocetism springs from a spurious spirituality, from a fastidiousness that has no place in true religion. It is symptomatic of Manicheanism, which associates matter with sin. Christians affirm sinlessness of Christ's humanity ; they do not affirm immateriality of His body. The monophysites, in abandoning

* The question of Justinian's orthodoxy has been debated ury and Hutton. See *Guardian*, March 4th and April 896.

the true Christology, were predisposed to the infection of this heresy. A being in whom organic process was present seemed to these heretics no fit object of worship. They called the orthodox Ctistolatrae or Phthartolatrae, worshippers of the created or corruptible.

Monophysites of all shades of opinion united in condemning the practice of worshipping Christ's human nature. That practice was in their eyes both idle and injurious ; idle, because the human nature did not exist as a separate entity ; injurious, because it fixed the mind of the worshipper on the finite. In consequence they were much opposed to all observances based on a belief in His humanity. Images or other representations of Him in human form seemed to them idolatrous. The monophysite church was not directly concerned in the iconoclastic controversy, but their doctrines were indirectly responsible for it. In fact the great monophysites, Severus and Philoxenus, have been styled " the fathers of the iconoclasts."

Monophysitism blind to the Dual Character of Christ's Experience

Such were the difficulties and errors into which their Christology forced the monophysites with respect to Christ's body. Difficulties equally great and errors equally fatal attended their attempt to conceive the conjunction of

psychic elements with the divine person. Their formula was too narrow. It compelled them to shut their eyes to one outstanding fact, namely, the duality of Christ's earthly experience. This fact confronts the reader on every page of the gospels. The duality is deep-seated ; it extends to each psychic element, yet stops short of the personality. In the world of Christ's nature there are two hemispheres. His experiences are on two planes. In both of these hemispheres or planes we find thought, will, and feeling. His thought on the higher plane is radically different in mode and scope from His thought on the lower plane. The two are of a different order. The same difference holds with respect to the other two psychic elements. We propose to exemplify this assertion, first, in the case of cognition, and then in the case of will and feeling. This procedure will simplify the task of exposing the further consequences of the monophysite Christology.

The Duality of Christ's Cognition

The duality of Christ's intellectual experience is evident to a New Testament student who has any acquaintance with psychology. We find in Christ two cognitive faculties with two dominant universes of thought and knowledge. On occasions He speaks and acts as if He read at a glance all the secrets of nature and the

human heart, as if all time past, present, and future was an open book to him, as if He were in the counsels of the Most High. On those occasions divine intuition superseded in Him the slow and faulty methods of human intelligence ; thought was vision, intellect intuition, knowledge omniscience. Thus His divine nature cognised and knew. That, however, is only one half of the picture. On other occasions his mind appears to have been perfectly human. His intelligence and perceptive faculties differed not essentially from ours. He asked questions and sought information. He used human categories. He progressed in wisdom. The development of His mind was gradual. His knowledge was relative to His age and surroundings. Memory and obliviscence, those complementary and perhaps constituent elements of soul-being, attention, sensation, recognition, and discursive reasoning, all these exhibitions of the workings of the normal mind appeared in Christ. In this manner His human nature cognised and knew.

Monophysitism entails the Apollinarian View of Christ's Human Nature as merely an Animated Body

The Catholic welcomes these evidences of the duality of Christ's intellectual life. On the theoretical side, they confirm the central dogma

of orthodox Christology. On the practical side, they give him authority for seeking Christ's sympathy in matters intellectual. He realises that since Christ understands the education of the mind and can share his intellectual difficulties, there is hope for the redemption and regeneration of the highest part of his nature. The monophysite finds neither support for his dogma, nor inspiration for life, in the fact that Christ had a human mind. He is blind to the fact. He has seen half the picture and regards it as the whole. His ideal is a being in whom intuition supersedes intellect, whose knowledge is immediate, absolute, and complete. The orthodox who held that Christ had and, at ordinary times, used a human reason, perfect of its kind, but still human in all the implications of the word, were in his eyes Agnoëtae ; they were unbelievers who asserted the ignorance of Christ and set bounds to the vision and knowledge of the infinite. The monophysite would modify his opinions and approach the catholic position on other doctrinal points, but never on this. He might be persuaded to admit that Christ's body and " animal soul " were real and human, but to the consubstantiality of Christ's mind with man's he would not subscribe. The Apollinarian strain in monophysitism was persistent. The later monophysites never succeeded in banishing it from their system. By Apollinarianism the humanity of Christ is

crippled in its highest member. It is a realm shorn of its fairest province. According to Apollinaris, all that Christ assumed was an animated body. His theory is like an ingenious system of canal locks for letting divine personality descend from the upper to the lower waters. The ingenuity displayed in it condemns it. It is an artificial makeshift. The psychology on which it rests is antiquated. The picture of Christ it presents does not correspond to the recorded facts of His life. Christ's human nature, as chiselled by the Apollinarian sculptor, is a torso. Such an image fails to satisfy the demands of religious feeling, and the doctrines, Apollinarian and monophysite, that enshrine it are therefore valueless.

Two Wills in Christ

We here leave the subject of cognition and pass to that of volition. Orthodoxy teaches that Christ had two wills. This doctrine has a double basis. In the first place, it is a corollary of the doctrine of two natures. In the second, it is established by the recorded facts of the gospel narrative. To take first the *a priori* argument. A nature without a will is inconceivable. A cognitive faculty without the dynamic of the volitional would be a machine without driving force. The absurdity of the supposition, indeed, is not fully brought out by

the simile. For we can consider the machine at rest; it would then have existence and potential activity. Will, however, is essential to the existence as well as to the activity of thought. The connection between them is vital to both. The psychologist distinguishes the respective parts each plays in life and marks off faculties to correspond to each. But his distinction is only provisional. The two develop *pari passu*; they are never separable; they act and re-act on one another. Without some degree of attention there is no thought, not even perception of external objects. Attention is as much an act of will as of thought. Man does not first evolve ideas and then summon will to actuate them. In the very formation of ideas will is present and active. Accordingly from the duality of Christ's cognitive nature the psychologist would infer that He had two wills. There is in Christ the divine will that controlled the forces of nature and could suspend their normal workings, the will that wrought miracle, the eternal will, infinite in scope and power, that was objectified in His age-long universal purpose, in a word, the will that undertook the superhuman task of cosmic reconstruction and achieved it.

It is not easy for us to conceive the co-existence of two wills in one person. The difficulty is part of the discipline of faith. Christ's human will is no less a fact than His

divine will. The former played as large a part in His earthly experience as the latter. It was present in all its normal phases, ranging from motor will to psychic resolve. The lower forms of volition, motor impulse, desire and wish, the higher forms, deliberation, choice, purpose and resolve, He shared them all with humanity. There is in Him a human will, limited in scope, varying in intensity, developing with the growth of His human experience, a will like ours in everything, except that it was free from moral imperfection. It was a finite will, inasmuch as the conditioning cognition was finite, perfect of its kind, adequate to its task, never faltering, yet of finite strength. The two wills have each their own sphere. They operate in perfect harmony. Only at crises, such as the Agony, is there any appearance of discord. The opposition there is only apparent. The human will reaches its limit, and the superhuman will interposes to perform the superhuman task.

The reality of the two wills, established for the orthodox both *a priori* and by an appeal to fact, is denied by the monophysite. He regards will as the fundamental psychic state and makes it an attribute of personality. Two wills, he says, would necessitate two persons. He does not see that personality lies deeper than will, and that will and cognition are co-ordinate attributes of nature. If Christ had but one nature, it follows that He had but one will and operation.

The monophysite thinks of two wills as necessarily antagonistic, as are conflicting motives in man; so he sees no ethical value in dithelite doctrine. As a matter of fact the moral influence of Christianity would be much weakened by an abandonment of the doctrine of two wills. The belief in Christ's human will prevents men from despairing of their will. Human will cannot be wholly warped, or wholly misdirected, or utterly powerless, since Christ in His life has shown that it can work along the same lines as the divine will, that the two can co-operate, and that where the lower reaches its limit, the higher can step in and perfect the work.

From the historian's point of view the monothelite controversy is quite distinct from the monophysite. So we need only take a glance at it here. It originated in an attempt to win back the monophysites to the orthodox communion by a doctrinal compromise. The emperor Heraclius endeavoured to unite catholic and monophysite on the basis of the formula, "two natures with one will and operation." That formula will not bear analysis, and the emperor's attempt to use it as an eirenicon was a complete failure. Imperial pressure induced a few monophysites to modify their doctrine so far as to admit "one theandric operation;" but the concession of "one will" from the orthodox side failed to win from the monophysites the expected concession of "two natures." The

monophysites were quite consistent here. To deny will of nature is an elementary mistake in psychology. Only a tyro in introspection will ascribe will directly to personality. A one-willed two-natured personality is little short of a psychological monstrosity. An attempt to rally Christendom round such a figure was bound to fail. The only lasting result of the emperor's activity was the formation of a new sect, the Maronites.

The Duality of Christ's Emotional Experience

We come now to the third element in the human spirit. It is only in modern psychology that feeling has secured recognition as a distinct constituent of man's nature; so it is not surprising that the question as to its position in the incarnate Christ was not raised in former days. Now, however, the psychology of feeling has come into its own, and it has become important to consider whether in this particular, too, Christ shared our human experience. Here, again, the argument for maintaining the duality of Christ's emotional experience is twofold. It follows, on the one hand, from the duality of the other parts of His nature; and, on the other hand, it is proved by the facts of His life as recorded in the gospels.

Human nature involves feeling, and two

natures involve two universes of feeling. Divine personality cannot be conceived as devoid of feeling. With men feeling lies in the depths of being; it is the dynamic of life. Feeling is the inner reflex of acts of thought and will. It invariably accompanies cognition and volition. If thought and will be attributed to the supreme being, the attribute of feeling cannot be left out. When the God in Christ acted, divine feeling accompanied the act.

This surmise is proved correct on reference to the records of His life. We find there two distinct emotional zones. Christ has all the blameless feelings natural to man. There are in Him the feelings accompanying sensation; physical pleasure and pain, hunger, thirst, weariness, and, in addition, the higher grades of feeling, æsthetic, sympathetic, and ethical. He experienced wonder, surprise, righteous anger, the sublime, joy and love. A life rich in emotion was the life of the Man Christ Jesus. When, however, we look more closely into His experience, we catch glimpses of feeling such as no man could know. We see there transcendent passion, great sorrow, great joy, so great that they would break a human heart. We may instance the deep emotion accompanying His resolve to go to meet His fate at Jerusalem, the rejoicing in spirit at the success of the apostles' mission, His Agony and His universal love.

The monophysites could not recognise this

duality in Christ's emotional nature. Hunger and thirst, and even the higher human feelings they considered derogatory to the Son of God. Even when they admitted that He suffered, they threw a veil of mystery over His sufferings. They idealised the Passion. They made it seem as if His flesh was privileged, as if His omnipotence excused Him from the emotional experiences of humanity.

Summary of the Chapter

We have examined the doctrine of one nature, and exposed its chief consequences. We have considered its effects in respect of the deity of Christ and in respect of His manhood. We have applied the doctrine to the human nature as a whole, and to the several parts that compose it. The result of the examination may be summarised in brief. Monophysitism destroys what is divine in the deity and what is human in the humanity. It offers to Christians a Christ who is not sufficiently above man to be able to help them by His power, nor sufficiently man to be able to help them by His sympathy. The monophysite Christ is neither very God nor very man, but a composition in which all traces of the original entities are lost to view.

CHAPTER IV

THE ETHOS OF MONOPHYSITISM

MONOPHYSITISM originated in a monastery. Eutyches, "the father of the monophysites," was a monk. The monastic temperament is peculiarly susceptible to this heresy, and the monastic element has always been dominant in the monophysite churches. The cloister is the natural habitat of the doctrine of the one nature. Monasticism is applied monism. If the world's existence be a sham, if its value compared with God be negligible, it becomes a religious duty to avoid all influences that heighten the illusion of the world's real existence and intrinsic value. The monist, like the monk, must renounce all secular interests and "go out of the world." The path of renunciation had an additional claim on the Christological monist. In his universal ideal, as manifested in time, the human elements were sublimated into the divine. Consequently his ideal of conduct imposed a negative attitude towards the world and a merging of his ego in the universal spirit. These are the ruling

elements in the spirit of the cloister, and these are the characteristics of the monophysite ethos.

Those men, to whom God is the sum of all reality and the world merely a cosmic shadow, regard worship as the sole worthy activity of the human spirit. In worship union with God is sought, a union so close that the personality of the worshipper is absorbed into the being of the worshipped. His experience of God is so intimate that his experience of the world is reduced to insignificance. As an overpowering human love welds two beings into one, and identifies their thoughts, wills, springs of action and even feelings, so the *amor dei* identifies man with God and makes possible a deification of humanity. Deeply religious natures in all ages have heard this mystic call. To lose their ego in the divine spirit is the height of their religious ambition. The conception is lofty, but it is not the Christian ideal of life and duty.

Mysticism and monophysitism are twin systems. Both are religious phases of pantheism. As, to the intellect, acosmism is the corollary of pantheism, so, to the heart, asceticism follows from mysticism. Whether conceived in terms of existence or of value, the world for the mystic is an obstacle to the *unio mystica*. It snares the mind through the senses and creates a fictitious appearance of solid reality in sensuous objects. It makes pretensions to goodness and attaches to itself a spurious value. The only remedy is

self-denial, denial of existence to the world, denial of credence to the senses, denial of gratification to the passions, desires, and inclinations. The monophysites were mystics. They were the rigorists of the eastern church. They formed the "no compromise" party. They stood for a thorough-going renunciation of the world and the flesh. Though they did not officially lay down the inherent evil of matter, Manicheanism is latent in their system. They did not explicitly identify matter with the spirit of evil, but they had the spiritual man's suspicion of matter and his contempt for the body of the flesh. Abstinence, mortification of the flesh, and all ascetic practices flourished in their communion. Art and culture were suspect; they had no eye for natural beauty. Some of their hymn-writers possessed considerable poetic taste; but poetry was discouraged by their leaders. Several of the extant letters of Severus of Antioch show that that patriarch did his best to banish that art from his church. His attitude may be gathered from the following quotation.* "As to Martyrius, the poet, . . . I wish you to know that he is a trouble to me and a nuisance. Indeed in the case of the others also who follow the same profession, and were enrolled in the holy clergy of the Church that is with us, I have debarred them from practising such poetry;

* E. W. Brooks, "Select Letters of Severus of Antioch," vol. ii. pp. 88, 89.

and I am taking much trouble to sever this theatrical pursuit from ecclesiastical gravity and modesty, a pursuit that is the mother of laxity and is also capable of causing youthful souls to relax and casting them into the mire of fornication, and carrying them to bestial passions." The result of this asceticism was a jaundiced and inhuman outlook on life. There was much piety among the monophysites, but it was confined to a narrow channel. Their zeal for purity of doctrine amounted to fanaticism ; their hatred of the Nestorian and of the Melchite at times reached a white heat. Toleration was almost unknown in their communion.

The claims of humanity appeal less to a monophysite than to other Christians. He places all life's values in the other world. He has no motive for trying to ameliorate the lot of his fellow-men. Social service has to him little or no divine sanction or religious value. We are speaking only of general tendencies. No follower of Christ, however perverted his views, could be totally indifferent to the welfare of other men ; but it came natural to the monophysite to think that it does not matter much how a man lives in this world of shadows, provided he holds communion with the world of unseen realities. The same motive accounts for the rapid decline of missionary activity in their communion. The Nestorians were far more active propagandists. Worship is a very

high type of service; but worship becomes selfish and sickens into sentiment, if it neglects the inspiring tonic of contact with human need. The monophysite Christology encouraged that form of self-sacrifice, whose goal is Nirvana, which lapses lazily into the cosmic soul and loses itself there in contemplation and ecstasy. It supplies no motive for that finer piety which manifests itself in ethical endeavour and practical philanthropy. His Christ had not partaken of the cup of suffering. His Christ's advance to human perfection was illusory. So the monophysite could not look for the sympathy of Christ in his own struggles, nor could he appeal to Christ's example in respect of works of human charity. Monophysitism considers only the religious nature of man, and takes no account of his other needs. We must therefore characterise the system as unsocial, unlovely, unsympathetic.

The uncompromising attitude of the individual monophysites was reflected in their ecclesiastical polity. We cannot but admire their sturdy independence. The monophysite church stood for freedom from state control. Her principles were the traditional principles of the Alexandrian see. Alexandria would not truckle to Constantinople, nor let religion subserve imperial policy. She would allow the catholic party to be Melchites (King's men) and to reap all the temporal advantages accruing

to the established church. In this matter the monophysites took a narrow view; but their narrowness evinces their piety. They felt the evils attendant on Constantine's grand settlement, and they made their ill-judged protest. They made it for no unworthy motive. There are always such thinkers in the church. A spiritual enthusiast despises the outward dignity that the church gains from an alliance with the State, and is often blind to the spiritual benefits conferred on the nation by that alliance, while he concentrates his gaze on incidental evils. To connect with Christology such an attitude towards the principle of Establishment may seem forced at first sight. The connection, however, exists. Independence of the temporal power is symptomatic with that unworldliness which, as we have shown above, characterises monophysitism. Its adherents paid no respect to the human as such. They attached no value to merely human institutions, and made no attempt to see or foster the divine that is in them. The argument that because the State is a human institution it should have no voice in ecclesiastical policy is typically monophysite; it is the argument of one who could draw no inspiration from the human life of the Son of God.

Mysticism and rationalism have much in common. They both are elements in the mental composition of almost every serious thinker. The sterility of logic often drives him to seek a

higher and surer instrument of knowledge. So there is no inconsistency in further characterising the monophysites as rationalists. The intellectuals of the eastern church were found mostly in their communion. Theirs was the formal logic point of view. Christ, they urged, was one and not two ; therefore His nature was one and not two. They could not see that He was both. In Bergsonian language, they used exclusively mechanical categories. Intelligence, an instrument formed by contact with matter, destined for action upon matter, they used on a supra-material subject. Their thinkers were highly trained logicians ; they revelled in abstract argument ; theirs was a cold intellectual metaphysic, unwarmed by flesh and blood empiricism.

Their narrow outlook on life, their religious zeal and their rationalist philosophy combined to produce in them sectarianism of an extreme type. Party spirit ran high among them. They fought the catholics ; they fought the Nestorians ; they fought one another. The list of schisms that occurred in their communion is of amazing length. The letters of Severus of Antioch make sad reading. They show us that the patriarch had constantly to interfere in cases of disputed succession to bishoprics. At almost every vacancy in the provincial dioceses there were parties formed each with their own nominee, ready to schismatise if they could not

secure recognition and consecration for him. It is evident that monophysitism does not foster the generous, tolerant, humane virtues of Christianity. It is the creed of monks, mystics, and intellectualists.

CHAPTER V

MONOPHYSITISM AND MODERN PSYCHOLOGY

CHRISTOLOGY divorced from empirical psychology is a barren science. Abstract discussions about person, nature and union of natures soon degenerate into logomachies. If personality is a psychic entity, and nature another distinct psychic entity, then the question at issue between diphysite and monophysite is worth debating. If they are concepts merely, the debate is hollow and of purely academic interest. A study of psychology clothes the dry bones with flesh. It puts life and meaning into these abstractions. It shows that they represent entities, that something corresponding to the terms " person " and " nature " is actually part of the being of every man, and that therefore their existence in Christ is a proper and practical subject for investigation. In so doing psychology provides the *rationale* of the Christological controversies. It justifies the church in her determined adherence to the precise expression of the truth. No Christian with powers of introspection, who can distinguish in his own

being personality and nature, can be indifferent to the Christological problem. The problem is one of fact, not theory. The terms and the formula are only of importance as expressing or failing to express the true facts of Christ's being. In a word, the psychology of the central figure of human history is the matter at issue.

Reference to psychological fact is what one misses in the records of the old controversies. The disputes read as if they were about shadows. No doubt that was often the case. Catholics and non-Catholics were often agreed as to the substance of belief, while owing to their devotion to words and formulæ the agreement went unrecognised. Had the disputants made clear to themselves and to each other what they meant by their abstract terms, had they translated them into their concrete psychological equivalents, heresy and schism would have been less frequent. It was, however, almost impossible for them to do so, because in their day theology was far more highly developed than psychology. Systematic observation of the workings of spirit was almost unknown. There existed no science of psychology as we know it. No clear notions attached to the terms " person " and " nature." They represented abstractions necessary to discursive reason rather than concrete psychic facts. All parties shared this defect. Among catholics and Nestorians as well as among monophysites knowledge of the constituents of human

nature was of the most rudimentary character. The catholic party, however, by keeping close to the facts recorded in the gospels, achieved a Christological formula that is psychologically intelligible; while the heretical parties were led by their preconceived opinions to fashion a Christ, whose features are unrecognisable as God or man, a psychological monstrosity.

Bergson's Theories throw Light on Christology

Without claiming finality for the findings of modern psychology, we can consider some results of the science as established. They are sufficiently well established, at any rate, to provide a starting-point for our investigation. In particular the brilliant observations and theories of M. Bergson throw, so it seems to the writer, a flood of light on Christology. We propose to outline the two key doctrines of the Bergsonian psychology and show how they confirm the truth of the orthodox formula and expose the monophysite fallacy. These key doctrines are, first, the interpenetration of psychic states, and, second, the distinction between deep-seated and superficial consciousness.

Bergson's Theory of the Interpenetration of Psychic States

It is, says Bergson, characteristic of psychic states that they do not, like material things,

remain external to one another. They interpenetrate. Cut up by human intelligence into discrete elements, in their own nature they remain a continuum. States of mind appear successive and external to one another, because age-long association with matter has accustomed men to material modes of thought. Man's intelligence is a by-product of activity. For purposes of action it is the externality of things that matters. The inner connection is relatively unimportant. Men act with precision on matter, because perception cuts up the continuum of matter into bodies, defined bodies no two of which can occupy the same space. Intelligence originating thus by contact with matter naturally prefers mechanical categories. These categories applicable to matter when applied to higher forms of existence mislead. We naturally conceive psychic states as external to one another, and their interpenetration seems an abnormality. At this stage of thought experience is pictured as a line of indefinite length, infinitely divisible, whose divisions correspond to the moments of consciousness. This spatial picture of mind is misleading in many ways, not the least in that it can offer no reasonable theory of the sub-conscious. Thinkers who materialise mental experience have no room in their theory for the sub-conscious. It is for them bare non-consciousness, a psychic vacuum. When, however, we start from this unique characteristic, that

mind possesses, of remaining one and indivisible throughout the greatest appearance of diversity, the sub-conscious falls naturally into the scheme. No part of our experience perishes. It is essentially self-perpetuating memory. The needs of action relegate the greater portion of it to the sub-conscious, but it is there, always linked to our conscious experience, and only awaiting the occasion to emerge into the full light of consciousness. Past penetrates into the present. One portion of our present penetrates into the other portions. Conscious and unconscious, past and present, combine to form one wonderful whole.

Monophysitism ignores the Duality in Christ's Experience

Such in outline is Bergson's theory of the interpenetration of psychic states. If this psychology be adopted, the abstract character of the catholic doctrine of Christ's being in large measure disappears. It becomes easy to conceive the interpenetration of two natures in one Christ. Further, the Bergsonian psychology furnishes a standpoint from which criticism of monophysitism is easy. Psychology at the monophysite stage of thought conceives the moments of Christ's consciousness in their mutual externality; they follow each other as do the ticks of a clock. They are discrete

elements strung along on a hypothetical ego. Christ's experience is conceived as unilinear. All that He did, suffered and thought is regarded as having taken place on one and the same plane of experience. This psychology has no room for another plane of experience. It has no room for a positive sub-consciousness. Consequently that one plane must be the one divine nature, which, as the monophysites taught, absorbed the human.

The one-nature theory is not true to the facts. It overlooks the complexity of Christ's experience. His experiences lie on two different planes. He has different universes of thought, different actuating wills and sets of feelings. Christ is not in one nature. The phases of His consciousness are twofold. His experiences fall naturally into two groups. While one group is in consciousness, the other is below the level of consciousness. Now the human experiences, now the divine, are uppermost. Both are always present. Life under such conditions is inconceivable, unless full recognition be accorded to the fact that conscious states interpermeate. If each state fall outside the other, and consciousness be a chain of successive ideas or emotions, a twofold nature within the one experience is meaningless. The view of conscious states as discrete leads inevitably to determinism. The place of one state in the chain is conditioned by its predecessor. There is no room for the

spontaneity and the creative power which characterise conscious life. Associationism cannot countenance the unforeseen and incalculable. So it is out of sympathy with Christian psychology. A function of the divine in Christ is to introduce the element of the unforeseen and incalculable into His normal and human experience. The Bergsonian psychology thus supplies an intellectual basis for belief in the possibility of two natures in Christ. When ideas are regarded as psychic entities whose essential property is mutual penetration, the ground is prepared for the catholic formula. Where this truth is not recognised, there arises inevitably the tendency to assert that Christ had and must have had but one uniform level of experience, and that assertion is the essence of monophysitism.

Bergson's Theory of Deep-seated and Superficial States

Bergson's psychology throws further light on a central doctrine of catholic Christology. It not only makes conceivable, as we have shown above, the co-existence of the two natures, but it lends support to the belief in the independent reality of His personality. Person and nature of Christology find their modern equivalents in the Bergsonian "deep-seated" and "superficial" states of consciousness. Bergson draws

a sharp line of distinction between these two. The deep-seated states constitute the kernel of being. They are the man's existence turned inwards. They are independent, free, creative. They are a unifying force. Always present, they only rarely make their presence felt. Only at moments of deep experience do they interfere with the surface self. The superficial states form the outward-regarding existence of man. They represent consciousness relaxed into moments of clock-time, moments more or less external to one another. They are not truly free. They are conditioned by the material environment. Whatever be thought of the metaphysic of this system, recognition cannot be refused to that part of it which rests on the solid foundation of psychological fact. Self-analysis discloses a two-fold experience in man. The stream of his life contains both current and undercurrent. The current is nature, the undercurrent personality.

Monophysitism annuls the Distinction between Divine Person and Divine Nature

This distinction is of paramount importance in Christology. Diphysites hold fast to the distinction. They maintain a human nature in Christ, but they do not humanise His person. The person cannot be humanised. It remained divine after the incarnation, as it was before.

Though He became man, the depth of His being was unchanged. The rain from heaven and the waters from the earthly spring mingle in one stream, but beneath the surface the deep undercurrent of being flows on unchanged. The monophysite in effect abandons this distinction. This is where his psychology is most seriously at fault. He confuses person and nature. Deep-seated and superficial states of soul are all one to him. He does not see the duality in the being of his fellow-men; so he cannot see it in the ideal man. This is a consequence of monophysitism which has not attracted the attention of theologians, and which the monophysite himself did not intend. The doctrine that rules out the human nature of Christ rules out the divine nature also, by confusing it with the personality. The monophysite affirms the divine nature while denying the human. Such affirmation is purely verbal. It is completely void of significance. The contrast between the divine and human natures is needed to throw personality into relief. Take away the human nature, and that contrast disappears, and with it goes the distinction between divine person and divine nature. Then, instead of a transcendent personality in whose portrait divine and human features are distinctly limned, we have a blur. Where God planned a unique though intelligible psychic harmony, we find a psychic medley.

Consciousness of Personality produced by a Violent Change of Occupation

This assertion is justified by an appeal to human experience. Men become sure of their own or of other people's personality by experiencing strong contrasts of natures in themselves or by observing them in others. For instance, a sudden and violent change of occupation establishes personality as a distinct entity. The civilian turns soldier. Almost immediately all parts of his nature are affected. He feels the development, as it were, of a second nature within him. His faculties are transformed. He enters a new universe of thought. His range of knowledge narrows in one direction, widens in another. His volitional nature is altered. His will narrows in scope, but increases in intensity. Nor does his emotional nature escape the change. Æsthetic values are reversed. He no longer feels pleasure and pain at the old objects. Physical desires play a much larger part in his life, and he loses taste for intellectual pleasures. The soldier returns to civilian life and, as it were, with his civilian attire he resumes his former nature, and all his old thoughts and feelings and impulses come flooding back. Such an experience is of considerable psychological interest. It exemplifies the interpenetration of different states of thought and activity. The contrasts bring home to a man the fact that

his spirit is a synthesis of heterogeneous elements. They force him back on himself. They rouse in him the dormant sense of personal being. It is the apprehension of strong contrast in his experience of himself, the apprehension of the plurality of his being, that accentuates the deep-lying unity. The more violent the change in the walks of life, the clearer becomes the concept of the continuity. Civilian or soldier, the man, the person is the same.

Personality is thrown into relief not only by change of occupation, but also by moral contrasts. Conflicting passions, opposing motives and internal debate serve to make a man realise himself. Strong personalities are often those in whom the conflict between good and evil is most acute. It is the very opposition of natures which brings out the personal element into the full light of conscious recognition.

We must now examine human personality in greater detail ; we must indicate its functions and show how it differs from human nature. Only by coming to grips with this psychological problem is it possible to appreciate the points at issue in the Christological question and to judge between catholic and monophysite.

Kant and the Dual Character of the Ego

Kant distinguished the noümenal from the phenomenal ego. The former he regarded as an

idea, the latter as a reality in time. The distinction corresponds roughly to that between person and nature. The phenomenal ego is the nature of man. It bears the brunt of the struggle of life. The noümenal ego is the transcendent personality of the individual—an idea which pure reason necessarily forms and which practical reason establishes. Though the Kantian philosophy no longer carries conviction, it is interesting to see that Kant felt and admitted a double current in man's being. He recognised that the superficial self is not the true being of the man. It is not necessary, however, to go as far as Kant went. We need not with him relegate the core of personal being to the realm of idea. Granted that personality is not part of our normal experience as nature is, there are times when the depths of being are stirred. Moments of crisis drive a man deeper than will and thought and even feeling, and make him conscious of himself as a psychic unity, permanent and of infinite value. Personality normally remains in the recesses of the subconscious. It is the hidden basis of life. It is active, though its activities are for the most part underground. It does not, however, lie altogether outside the ken of consciousness. It may be experienced; it is experienced when great emotion rends the surface fabric of the man and discloses the true self.

Human Personality and Human Nature

What is human personality ? It is a psychic entity whose most important function is to unify the parts of a man's nature. It is the principle of unity and the instrument of unity. A man's thought, will and feeling are distinct and real entities. His intelligence takes various forms from perception to abstract thought ; it may be directed to outward things, to thoughts of things, or to pure idea. He wills many things, and wills them in different modes and with varying degrees of intensity. A wide range of feeling is found in him, from physical to mental, from organic to ideal feeling. His nature is tripartite. Each part admits of variation in itself and in its interaction with the other parts. Each of the three expresses the man at the moment. No one of the three gives the whole account of his being. Nor do the three taken together. Though his nature is tripartite the man himself cannot be resolved into component parts. He has his faculties and states, but he is more than their sum. He may lose himself in thought or activity, or abandon himself to feeling, but when he is fulfilling his true function, when he is most himself, all parts of his nature are concentrated to a point. Partial activity of thought, will, or feeling is then replaced by activity of the personality. Personality is the synthetic unity of all parts of a man's nature. It has the wonderful

power of compressing to a point a medley of psychic elements. Moods and memories, perceptions and ideas, wishes and purposes, it tensions them all up, merges them and expresses them in characteristic acts representative of the man.

Personality differs from nature also in respect of relation to environment. It is relatively independent of circumstances. Habit and education mould the nature, but if they touch the person they do so only indirectly. The nature must be deeply affected before a change in the person is registered. Personality is not synonomous with inherited disposition; but it bears a similar relation to nature as inherited disposition does to acquired habit. It is to nature what character is to action. It is to nature what in Weismann's theory the germ plasm is to the somatic cell. Changes in it are mediated by nature and are almost imperceptible in a life time.

Again, nature is the superficies of the soul. It is the part that comes in contact with the world of things and people. A man's nature is what he is for other people; what he is in and for himself alone is personality. There is a substance or self-existence of the psychic states. Thought, will and feeling have all and each an external reference. The internal reference of the whole is the core of being. Our perception of personality in other people is a subtle thing.

In the ordinary give and take of life we are not aware of it. It is when we realise the subject as a self-existent unity that we recognise personality. We judge a man's nature by his thought or will or feelings as conveyed through the ordinary channels of communication. Personality is felt. It is a magnetism that influences, but remains inarticulate.

Person and nature differ also in respect of relation to the body. The co-existence of heterogeneous natures in the same body is a fact of experience. Different universes of thought, different levels of will and feeling can be lodged in one organism. The higher the development of the individual, the more clearly marked is the duality or plurality of nature. It is otherwise with personality. In normal cases no two personalities can tenant the one body. The unity of the organism is the outward expression and guarantee of the unity of the person. There are of course pathological cases which form exceptions to this rule. Such cases, however, only serve to emphasise the distinction between person and nature. In cases of dual personality the occupancy of the one body is not simultaneous. Jekyll alternates with Hyde. Dual personality is a totally different phenomenon from duality of nature. Duality of nature is relatively superficial. In dual personality the divergence in mental and moral outlook is so radical that responsibility for the acts

of the one entity cannot attach to the other entity.

Personality then is the synthetic principle in man's being. Psychology reveals it as unifying the parts of a man's soul and welding into an indivisible whole the various elements of conscious and subconscious experience. The student of Christology welcomes this account of personality, but he requires more. He seeks a parallel for the union of two whole and perfect natures. He demands some reason for holding the central dogma of the incarnation to be intelligible and probable. The next step in the argument accordingly is to ask, "Why limit the synthetic power of personality?" If personality can synthesise parts of a nature, why should it not also synthesise natures? If human personality can unify such heterogeneous psychic elements as thought, will and feeling, and present them as a harmonious whole, is it not credible that divine personality should carry the synthesis a step further and harmonise in one being the thoughts, wills and feelings of God and man? The hypostatic union of natures in Christ is a phenomenon not psychologically improbable, and one which can be paralleled from human experience. There is in man what is tantamount to a conjunction of the two natures. Man is rather diphysite than monophysite. We pointed out above the extensive modifications that can be produced in a man's nature by

environment. There is in him a deeper duality which we can only characterise as an association of divine and human. Man is an inhabitant of the earth, of earthly descent and finite destiny ; yet the divine is not totally foreign to him. He has hopes of heaven, moments of supra-consciousness, at times vision, resolve and emotion that are supra-normal. The divine is an element in him. It is more than an aspect of his nature. Its influence operates often in opposition to the human element. He is, as Bergson puts it, at the meeting-point of the upward and the downward currents. He can know God, can do the will of God, can be filled with the love of God. Here are the three factors of his nature, raised to a higher power. His experience may lie and often does lie on two planes. He is " double lived in regions new."

In applying this human analogy to the ideal man caution is necessary. The duality of natures is a fact in both cases, but there is one essential difference. The personal substratum of the natures in one case is human, in the other case divine. In man the divine element is part of his nature, but not part of his person. The ego remains human through all spiritual development. " The best of saints is a saint at the best." The secondary element in him is a fact, but it is part of his nature, not of his person. It is otherwise in the case of Christ. He came from the ideal world and returned there. The

background of his experience was and is divine. The secondary element in Him was the human, the primary the divine. He shared man's experience and shared it really, but it did not form part of the core of His being. When He thought or willed or felt as a man, it was a κένωσις, a limiting of his natural mode of self-expression. Divine and human are both present in the experience of Christ and of mankind, but with this difference—man rises to the divine; Christ condescended to the human.

Value of Bergson's Psychology to Orthodox Christology

Person and nature are then real and distinct psychic entities. They are real alike in God and man. The distinction between them is not artificial or verbal; it is perhaps elusive, but it is genuine and capable of proof from experience. The synthetic faculty of personality manifests itself in uniting without confusing, first, parts of the nature, second, entire natures. These theses supply what is requisite for an intelligent appreciation of Christology. Without them Christology is a battle of shadows; with them it becomes a practical problem of first importance for religious minds. The psychology which justifies orthodox Christology is that which proclaims the interpenetration of psychic states, and which distinguishes between the surface

states of a relaxed consciousness, and the deep-seated states which are ever present, but of which we are conscious only at moments of tension.

The catholic mind conceives the person of Christ as an eternal self-existent synthetic unity that has combined in an indissoluble union the natures of God and man. Human parallels make intelligible the co-existence of the two natures in the one person and the one body. What is normal in man is surely possible in the ideal man. Heretical Christologies err in their psychology. In Nestorian Christology Christ is presented as a dual personality, an abnormal association in one body of two distinct self-existent beings. Thus a pathological case would be elevated to the rank of mankind's ideal. The monophysite psychology plunges men into the opposite error. An undiscriminating craving for unity among the phenomena of psychic life prevents any recognition of the dual character of experience. Monophysitism is blind to the difference between person and nature because it places all psychic experiences on the one level. Determined to find unity in its ideal, it seeks an inappropriate unity, the mathematical unity, the unity that excludes plurality. To the monophysite the major part of the gospels is a sealed book, because the major part of the facts there recorded about Christ could not possibly have happened to a one-natured Christ. His

human knowledge, normal, limited, progressive, His human will, natural, adequate to the human, inadequate to the superhuman task, his human feelings, his body consubstantial with ours are to the monophysite merely shadows or symbols or aspects of something greater. They are dwarfed into nothingness. They are lost in the divine omniscience, omnipotence and transcendent love.

CHAPTER VI

MONOPHYSITISM IN THE PRESENT DAY

"TO believe rightly the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ" is an ideal that the thoughtful Christian strives to attain. He expects to find the solution of high moral and speculative problems in that union of divine and human. The right faith is not easily reached. It is an elusive prize. There are conditions moral and intellectual attaching to its possession. The moral conditions may take a lifetime to fulfil. Even on its intellectual side faith is a long process. No sudden mental grasp of the whole truth can be attained. It dawns on the mind gradually. The discipline of faith in the incarnation consists in a gradual and laborious advance from stage to stage. The various stages are half-truths or inadequate conceptions of Christ. They are objectified in the Christological heresies. These heresies arrange themselves in a sequence so strict and so logical that one could almost say that they are deducible *a priori* from the concept "divine-human." Certainly the subjective fancies of the heresiarchs

do not provide the whole account. There is something of the universal in these heresies. They are in the main current of religious thought. As the chief historic systems of philosophy repeat themselves in each generation and in the intellectual development of individual thinkers, so do the Christological heresies recur. There is considerable truth in Hegel's contentions that the development of a man's mind is one with that of the general consciousness, that the individual reason is a miniature of the universal reason, that in fact the history of a philosopher's thinking is an abstract of the history of philosophy. The same holds good in the field of religious thought. Without much artificiality, without forcing the facts, a rational scheme of the Christological heresies might be drawn up. They might be pictorially represented as the rungs of a ladder, which the truth-seeking mind scales rung by rung, pausing at the lower phases of Christological thought, and then resuming the ascent till the highest truth is attained. The instrument of thought is much the same in all centuries; the objects of thought vary very little; so it is intelligible that the products of speculative and religious thought should remain the same to-day as in the fifth century.

The Existence of Modern Monophysitism

Is there such a thing as modern monophysitism? To this question the preceding

paragraph supplies the answer, " There must be." Heretical tendencies will be found in the Christian community in every generation, and the religious thought of individual Christians will pass through heretical phases. Such heresy is rather an intellectual than a moral fault ; but the possibility of being the heirs, without knowing it, of the opinions of Nestorius and Eutyches throws on thinkers to-day the responsibility of examining their Christological beliefs and of testing them by the canon of orthodoxy. Not a few leaders of religious thought, in intention orthodox, in fact remain monophysites, through inability to analyse their beliefs or through a false sense of security, founded on the opinion that the age of heresy is past.

It is commonly supposed that belief in the deity of Christ constitutes Christianity. That supposition is wrong. Arius was not the only heresiarch. To transcend the Arian standpoint is only the first step in the long discipline of faith. There are other heresies, other half-truths scarcely less pernicious than the Arian. The recognition of Christ as God represents a great intellectual and moral advance, and is the first essential step in religion ; but to rest content with the taking of that step is to remain on the lowest rung of the ladder of faith. It is little use to form a lofty conception of Christ, if in doing so we insulate Him from the world of things and souls. That is what monophysitism

does, and because disguised monophysitism is prevalent in the church to-day, Christianity's grip is weak and the fire of devotion low.

We may picture faith as a battlefield. Doubt is the enemy entrenched in depth. Arianism holds the first line of trenches. Echeloned behind Arianism are the other heresies in a network of fortified redoubts, strong points and support trenches. The church militant must make the furthest line her objective. If her advance stays at an intermediate point, she is exposed to cross-fire from the support trenches of the subsidiary heresies. The ground gained by the first assault proves untenable. The position won can only be secured by pushing home the attack to the final objective and consolidating her line there in the might of full catholic doctrine.

A thorough and systematic advance of this sort was made by the orthodox Christologians of the fifth century. The campaign was fought and won then. It has, however, to be fought anew in each generation and in the experience of individual thinkers. Monophysitism is commonly regarded as a vagary of oriental thought, killed once and for all by a church council in the fifth century. That is a superficial view. Monophysitism is a hydra growth, and no Hercules can be found to exterminate it. It reappears in each succeeding age, in West as well as East. The structure of the

human intellect is such that, whenever men begin to investigate the being of Christ, the tendency to regard Him as one-natured is present. The church of the fifth century exposed that doctrine; it was beyond her power to kill it.

Reasons for the Prevalence of Monophysitism

Monophysitism is in our midst undetected to-day. It is not hard to account for its prevalence. The clergy are for the most part unable to expound Christology, and the laity are impatient of exposition. Anything savouring of precise theology is at a discount. So pulpit and pew conspire to foster the growth of the tares. The "Athanasian" creed is in disrepute, and its statement of dogmatic Christology is involved in the discredit attaching to the damnatory clauses. The clergy are perhaps rather glad to leave the subject alone. They know it is a difficult subject, and they are afraid of burning their fingers. The laity rarely hear any reference to the two natures of Christ. If they do, they are not interested; they do not think that the question makes any difference to faith or practice. The whole extent of the Christological knowledge possessed by the average churchman is comprised in the formula, "Christ is God and man." He cannot apply the formula nor reconcile it with common sense.

He occasionally hears from the pulpit the phrase "God-man"; but it is a mere phrase to him; it is not translated for him into a language that he can understand. So he registers the doctrine mentally as an impenetrable mystery and gives it no further attention, or perhaps turns away in disgust from the system whose central figure is so unintelligibly presented by its authorised exponents. The bare statement that Christ is God and man, though true, is not adequate. It carries no conviction to thinking minds to-day. The full definition of the council of Chalcedon should be published broadcast, and so studied by theologians in the light of modern psychology that they can present it as a reasonable dogma, intelligible to-day and touching modern life.

In the absence of such teaching the spread of false, unbalanced or inadequate conceptions of what Christ was and of what He is is inevitable. Our concern here is to exhibit those of a monophysite character. Monophysite tendencies of the present day may be grouped according as they affect Christ's being or His work or Christian practice. We propose to take them in that order.

Modern Presentations of Christ Esoteric and Deficient in Personal Appeal

Monophysitism in respect of Christ's being shows itself to-day in negative rather than

positive ways. To its subtle influence is traceable the capital defect of modern presentations of Christ, namely, that they make no appeal to the outsider. Christ is proclaimed as the solution of moral, social and industrial problems. As a rule in such cases the name "Christ" is used as a synonym for Christian principles. Such appeals are addressed to the head; they do not touch the heart and fire the imagination; they do not kindle that personal devotion to the Man Christ Jesus which has always been the dynamic of the faith. The historic Christ is not presented in a way that would appeal to the unconvinced. Christian teaching is becoming more and more esoteric. In the language of Christology, a diphysite Christ is not preached. His human nature is kept in the background. It is not portrayed in arresting colours. If the apostles and apostolic men had preached the impersonal redeemer of modern religious thought, they would never have won the world for Christ. Their imaginations and lives were fired by contact with a Man of flesh and blood. So they presented a Christ whose true humanity appealed to His fellow-men. They showed the gospel picture to an unbelieving world, and the world responded to its appeal.

It is not easy to bridge the centuries and regain the apostles' standpoint, but until it is done the church's message will lack inspiration. The phrase "the historic Christ" is commonly

used, as if it covered the whole ground. It is certainly serviceable as a protest against a bare logos theory of the incarnation, but in itself it is not adequate. What requires emphasis is the humanity of the historic Christ. Many Christian teachers purposely withhold this emphasis from fear of playing into the hands of Arians and Nestorians. No doubt if pressed they would give intellectual assent to the dogma of the two natures, but they shrink from following it out to its consequences. There is a widespread feeling that it is irreverent to dwell on the fact that Christ was a real man. A firm grasp of catholic Christology in its entirety is the cure for this squeamishness. To obscure the fact of His Manhood is not the true reply to a denial of His Deity. A true presentation of Christ must give full weight to the facts that He had a human body, human mind, human feelings and human will, that His body was in space normally subject to physical law, that His consciousness and subconsciousness conformed to psychic law. Wherever a denial of these facts is found, there is monophysitism. Wherever they are obscured or neglected, there are monophysite tendencies.

Indifference to Christ's Sufferings—a Classical Comparison

Failure to appreciate the real humanity of Christ's life results in comparative indifference

to the tragedy of His death. Monophysitism in undermining belief in the reality of Christ's manhood is weakening sympathy with His sufferings. Calvary like Bethlehem has lost much of its appeal. A classical comparison will illustrate this fact. Plato's account of Socrates' last hour in the prison and of his drinking the hemlock is, I imagine, to many educated men far more moving than the story of the Passion and Death of Christ. There is a curious similarity in the two tragedies that invites attention and comparison. Both sufferers were heroes and moral reformers, the victims of mistaken zeal on the part of religious authority. Socrates died in a ripe age with his life work accomplished. Jesus was cut off in His prime. Socrates' last hours were tranquil and his passing quick and easy. Jesus after shame and torture died a lingering death. The dysthanasia of Jesus should, one would opine, make a stronger appeal to men's sympathies than does the euthanasia of Socrates. Yet on the whole the reverse is the case. The difference in the respective styles of the two narratives does not give the whole explanation. It is true that the Phaedo is a work of fine art while the gospel story is a plain statement of fact. The reason, however, for the difference in appeal goes deeper than literary style. The reader of the Phaedo puts himself into the place of Socrates and suffers with him. As we read the Passion of Christ there rises a barrier

between us and the divine sufferer. Unconsciously we say to ourselves, "Christ suffered, of course, but He did not suffer as we should have suffered in His place. His were not the real sufferings of a real man."

If the passion of Christ and that of Socrates were weighed in the same balances, there would be less indifference to-day to the gospel story. Were Christ the Man realised as such, visualised, as other great men of history are visualised, among his followers, the hero worship that inspired the early church would revive. What makes Christians indifferent to Christ's sufferings is not the lapse of centuries nor weakness of imagination but a subconscious monophysitism. There is to most minds a haze of unreality overhanging the accounts of His life and death. They forget that He shared human experience to the full. They think of Him as doing things ῥηιδίως like the Homeric gods. In point of fact, His great results were achieved only after long laborious exertion. His was a life of strenuous human activity, physical and mental. Even His miracles were accompanied by a physical throb of sympathy; virtue went out of Him. Redemption made it necessary. Enthusiastic devotion to a person must be grounded in community of experience. It is the human touches in the drama of Christ's life that make the most powerful appeal to mankind. Yet the human element is

obscured, as a rule, in modern presentations of the gospel. For spiritual minds it is comparatively easy to apprehend a divine Christ. To apprehend a human Christ makes a larger call on their imagination and their sympathy. Spiritual men are naturally monophysite in their thinking. They shrink from the mental effort that diphysitism demands. Their attention is focussed on Christ's superiority to human limitations. They scarcely see the miracle of the human, and thus they miss the import of the divine miracle. In the atmosphere of monophysitism mysticism thrives, but devotion decays. We may instance the almost total disappearance of the crusading spirit. The Christ to whom our thoughts usually turn is an omnipresent ideal with no historical or local associations. His birth-place and His country evoke only a lukewarm sentiment. The church's year is neglected. The historical facts of Christ's life are often regarded as of only minor importance. Piety used to consist in personal loyalty to the Founder of a universal religion; it is now considered synonymous with obedience to the "golden rule."

To attribute Omniscience to Christ's Human Nature is Monophysitism

Within recent times the question as to the limitation of Christ's knowledge was hotly

debated. That debate showed how much uncertainty on Christological questions exists and how strong monophysite opinion still is. In spite of Christ's own *dicta*, in spite of the dogma of two natures, denial of the limitation was widespread and persistent. To many devout minds it seems impious to speak of Christ's ignorance. This is a case in which the Chalcedonian definition is an invaluable guide. If one brings to an examination of Christ's nature the preconceived notion of His omniscience, the doctrine of the limitation of His knowledge seems an outrage on belief; but if one approaches the question with the orthodox formula in mind, one is prepared to find that His cognitive faculties were perfectly human and humanly perfect. So we find it. His knowledge and His faculties of knowledge on the lower plane of His experience were essentially the same as ours. He thought in our categories. He used our organon, perfect of its kind, but still a human organon. As man, inevitably, He had thoughts uncognised; and such a mental state we call "ignorance." His mind passed through stages of development as ours does. Education widened His horizon, strengthened His faculties, and increased His knowledge. Advance in knowledge implies a prior state of relative ignorance. The word "ignorance" as applied to Christ sounds very terrible; but investigation of its meaning robs it of its terrors. We use the

word in two senses. On the one hand it may mean the absence of a thought, its absolute non-presence in consciousness. On the other it may mean thought unrelated to experience, one whose implications are not or cannot be fully deduced, in fact, the incomplete cognition of an idea. In neither case does it involve imperfection in the instrument or moral fault. On the contrary ignorance is a mark of the normal in cognition. If ignorance and limitation of knowledge were not found in Christ, we should be forced to agree with Apollinaris that the divine Logos had superseded His human intellect.

Ignorance in so far as it is a positive attribute is far from being a mark of imperfection. It is a true paradox that ignorance like obliviscence forms part of the process of human cognising. Probably in the truth of things memory is of the essence of mind. Thoughts naturally and spontaneously reproduce themselves. The past of experience tends automatically to carry forward into the present. The function of the brain then, or of a mental faculty intimately co-operating with the brain is to discriminate, to sift and select, to prolong into present consciousness what is of importance for action and to relegate the irrelevant to partial or total oblivion. From this psychological standpoint ignorance and obliviscence are seen to be achievements of the intellect. The presence of all facts in a human consciousness is unthinkable.

If it were possible, it would paralyse action. If we exempt Christ from the law of ignorance and obliviscence, we *ipso facto* dehumanise his cognition. When we say that Jesus was ignorant of much scientific truth, or that his prescience was limited, we do not compromise His dignity. We simply assert the naturalness of His intellect and the true humanity of that element of His nature. To do otherwise, to claim omniscience for His human intellect is gross monophysitism. His knowledge was deeper, surer, more penetrating than ours, because the light of His divine intuition streamed through the veil of sense and illumined the lower phases of intelligence. This is an instance of the *communicatio idiomatum.* The properties of the two natures act and react upon one another. But we must make the distinction of natures our starting-point, or fusion will take place. There must be *idiomata* first, or the *communicatio* is meaningless.

The Present Existence of Christ's Human Nature

The view taken of the Christ of the past necessarily affects belief in the Christ of the present. It is scarcely possible to realise the present existence of a human Christ, unless the fact of His actual human existence in the first century of our era be grasped. If He had but

one nature on earth, He has but one nature now in heaven. If the historic Christ was monophysite, so also is the Christ to whom we pray. In this consequence consists the seriousness of modern monophysitism. The present reality of His human nature is to-day even among His followers doubted, obscured, or forgotten. Christ is to many spiritual minds merely an ideal personality, a summary of their own ethical ideals. They perhaps regard Him as a disembodied spirit or mysterious influence. They rarely attain the catholic standpoint and see the human nature as a psychic entity actually existent to-day. At any rate the doctrine is not thought out to its consequences. The "perpetual intercession" is, it is feared, little more than a phrase. That Christ as man still intercedes for men is a verity not understood and only half appreciated. Yet the official doctrine of orthodoxy teaches that there is a full and true continuity of existence between the Christ of Galilee and the Christ to whom we pray. The Church teaches that there is somewhere, in some transcendent form of existence, a being with perfect human mind, whose will in strength and scope is perfectly proportioned to His knowledge, whose feelings are in perfect mutual harmony, whose psychic nature finds outward expression in a glorified body; that this perfect being once walked this earth, and yet had and has the ground of His being in a divine personality.

Such a Christ the latent monophysitism of our thinking hides from our view.

The Doctrine of Subjective Redemption due to Monophysitism

The doctrines of Christ's person and of His work are intimately associated. What He did depended on what He was. Christology and Soteriology act and react upon each other. If Christology is crippled, Soteriology goes lame. Christ takes His stand in the centre of the cosmic process in virtue of His unique being. In that He unites deity and humanity in His own person, He brought redemption within the reach of mankind. His redemption of humanity was as definite a fact as His assumption of human nature. Both to the Christian are objective historical facts; if either of them falls to the ground, so does the other; and with that collapse goes the purpose of creation and humanity's hope. A docetic interpretation of the human nature entails a docetic view of redemption. Monophysitism, as we have seen, casts doubts upon the reality of the sufferings and humanity of Christ; in so doing it compromises the work He accomplished. Atonement ceases to be a cosmic transaction completed on Calvary, and becomes a subjective process. Redemption is made into an attitude, or rather a change of attitude, on the part of the

individual. That Christ wrought a power and hope for man which man could not achieve for himself is not a familiar doctrine to-day. Pain, not sin, is the great modern problem. The Cross is made to stand for sympathy, not for satisfaction. Salvation, achieved at a definite moment of history and conferred on believers of subsequent generations, rests for its foundations on the objective assumption of human nature by a divine person. If the foundations be undermined, as monophysitism undermines them, the superstructure crumbles. Redemption becomes improvement by effort and self-help, or a constant endeavour after a private ideal of conduct.

Monophysitism limits the Scope of Redemption

Monophysitism shows itself also in the modern tendency to narrow the scope of redemption. Partial salvation is offered as a substitute for the salvation of the entire man. This tendency is a natural result of narrowing the import of the incarnation. It runs counter to orthodox Christology and the derivate doctrines. A divine economy is traceable in God's dealings with men; there is nothing purposeless, nothing otiose in God's dispensation. The Church's invariable answer to the Apollinarians was grounded in belief in this

economy. She argued that Christ could not redeem what He did not assume, and, conversely, that what He assumed He redeemed. He assumed human nature in its entirety, thought, will, feeling and body; therefore not one of those elements of human nature lies outside the scope of redemption. Monophysitism excludes some or all of those elements from the being of the incarnate Christ, and by so doing deprives the corresponding elements in man's nature of their rightful share in the benefit of redemption.

The feeling that some parts of human nature are more fitted to survive than others is widespread to-day. It is found within as well as without the Church. We constantly read of the "survival factor." The term implies the belief that at death part of the man's nature survives and part perishes. There is, however, no general agreement as to which part constitutes the "survival factor." The intellectualist pins his faith to the immortality of the reason. He is content to let death deprive him of everything except the logical faculty. For the æsthete beauty alone is eternal, and his hope for the future lies in the continuance of his æsthetic sense. The materialist sees permanence only in the indestructibility of the ultimate physical constituents of his body. The epigenesis of a spiritual body lies outside his horizon. The volitionist finds all the value of life in the moral nature. For him the good will persists when

all else is resolved into nothingness. Character alone, he says, survives the shock of death. All these limited views of survival are symptoms of monophysite ways of thinking. The Christian, on the contrary, holds that what is redeemed *eo ipso* survives. Whatever else is involved in redemption persistence certainly is included. Monophysitism stands for a partial redemption; but to the orthodox who believe that Christ assumed human nature in its entirety, each part and the whole are of infinite value. He holds that the strengthening, purifying, and perfecting that salvation brings apply to the psychic and the physical natures, that no part is exempt, that neither intellect nor will nor feeling ceases with death, that the range of reason will be increased, and its operation made more sure, that lofty and sustained endeavour will replace the transient energy of the earthly will, that feeling will be enhanced, harmonised, and purified, that a spiritual body continuous with the body of the flesh will express man's heavenly experience. These high far-reaching hopes rest on the doctrines of catholic Christology. Christ assumed our nature complete in body and psychic parts. He did so with a purpose, and that purpose could be none other than the redemption of the body and of all the psychic elements. To the mystic, body and human activities may seem only transient and unworthy of a place in heaven. Such is false

spirituality. It is contrary to the tenor of catholic teaching. The incarnation brought divine and human together on earth. The resurrection fixed their union. The ascension gave humanity an eternal place among eternal things.

Monophysitism shown in the Modern Tendency to make the Death of Christ a Secondary Factor in the Scheme of Redemption

We have seen above that monophysitism discredits the reality of Christ's sufferings. Dogmatic reasons apart, the monophysite is motived by a repugnance to physical pain and by a wish to exclude it from the experience of the human ideal. To this motive we can trace the modern tendency to transfer the doctrinal centre of gravity from the Passion to the incarnation. The Passion and Death used to occupy the first place in the thoughts of Christians and formed the foundation for all theories of atonement. The incarnation was regarded as, for the purposes of dogma, subsidiary. Within recent times the position has been reversed. The main stress falls now on the incarnation. The Passion seems of secondary importance, if, as modern theology often teaches, all purposes of redemption were secured prior to it. In thus changing the venue of redemption

modern theology is wrong. The mistake is prompted largely, so it seems to the writer, by monophysitism latent in modern religious thought; at any rate strict adherence to the catholic doctrine of two natures would have prevented it. The human nature that Christ assumed had to be perfected through suffering; otherwise it could not attain that universality and representative character which enabled it to become the medium of universal salvation. If it had been enough for the divine spirit to mingle with men, to show them a pattern life, and to touch them to higher things, an apparition would have been adequate, and no community of suffering would have been necessary. Since Christ not only appeared as man, but experienced in His flesh all man's experiences, death which is the climax of human experience fell to His lot and set the seal to the divine enterprise. Since He who died was the flesh and blood embodiment of the cosmic relation, His death has cosmic significance. The doctrinal edifice in which Calvary is of ornamental and not of structural value has monophysitism for its foundation.

Historical Character of Christianity obscured

Christ's mission is misunderstood to-day as well as His cosmic work. In certain religious quarters where zeal is not balanced by learning,

His mission as the founder of a religious society is forgotten. To those who are deficient in historic sense the continuity of the Church down the centuries seems unimportant, and institutional religion a hindrance rather than a help to the spiritual life of the individual Christian. Pietism of this kind has always been present in the church ; to-day it is prevalent. It nominally associates its piety with the historic Christ, but actually it worships an ideal constructed by its own ethical imagination. Such pietists spiritualise the faith. The facts of the historic creed are to them little more than symbols of religious truth. Spiritual resurrection, spiritual ascension are the only miracles for them. This tendency to spiritualise everything is a phase of monophysitism. It results from losing sight of the person of the historic Christ, and resolving His assumption of human nature into the assumption of a title.

Christology a Determinant of Sacramental Thought

Errors in sacramental teaching necessarily accompany misconceptions of the person of Christ. The incarnation is a cosmic sacrament, the meeting-point of divine and human, and the sacraments of the church are types of the vaster mystery. In both type and antitype it is all important to give due weight to divine and

human, and not to exalt one element at the expense of the other. Those who undervalue the human nature of Christ are disposed to undervalue the outward sign in the sacraments. Not appreciating the hypostatic union of divine with human, they misunderstand the sacramental union of the same elements. Blind to the significance of Christ's humanity in the economy of redemption, they fail to see how matter can be the channel of sacramental grace. Yet the discipline of faith is the same in both cases. The Christian enterprise is not merely to believe in the divine, but to believe in the divine manifested in the human.

There are two divergent, almost opposing, schools of sacramental teaching, both of which have inherited the spirit of monophysitism. Both are instances of sacramental monism. First, there are those who identify the outward signs and the inward grace; second, those to whom the inward grace is everything and the outward sign nothing. Both schools of thought destroy the nature of a sacrament. The radical error of both consists in undervaluing the human and material. In the first case the error takes the form of the transubstantiation doctrine, which is exactly parallel to the extreme form of Eutychianism. According to Eutyches, the human nature of Christ was absorbed into the divine and lost there; the truth of His being was the divine personality; the human element

was only an appearance. Similarly the transubstantiation theory conceives the mutation of the *substance* of the material elements and the loss of their proper nature; the appearance of reality that the *accidents* possess is an illusion of the senses. We may note in passing that the opposite error to transubstantiation finds its Christological parallel in Nestorianism. Socinianism which separates symbol from sacramental grace is sacramental dualism, as Nestorianism is Christological dualism. Both abandon a vital unity of divine and human. The pietistic or mystical view of the sacraments does so too, but in a different way. This second form of sacramental monism has much in common with the doctrine of one nature. To the pietist the divine seems all important, and the material no help, but rather a hindrance to the spiritual life. The faith of the individual to him is the seat of the efficacy of the sacraments; he regards matter as unreal if not sinful, and in either case unworthy to be a channel of divine grace. Echo after echo of monophysite thought can be caught here. The surest way to combat sacramental errors on both sides is a clear and definite statement of the catholic doctrine of Christology.

Need of a Mental Reconstruction of the Human Nature of Christ

As the interval of time widens, separating Christians from the human life of their God,

the more urgent becomes the obligation to put forth a constructive effort of the historical imagination. The attempt to keep that memory green grows harder and harder as the centuries pass ; but Christians must make it ; otherwise the historical character of their religion will perish. There need be no fear that the interests of spiritual religion will suffer. Amongst moderns the danger of idealising the human is greater than that of humanising the divine. An intelligent appreciation of Christ's human life draws out love and kindles reverence towards the divine personality who condescended to the level of mankind. We may point by way of illustration to the effect of biblical criticism. Christians of a previous generation dreaded the touch of criticism. They thought it profanation. They refused to admit any human element in the bible. Criticism, however, had its way. Bibliolatry had to go. The result is that the bible is a living book to us to-day. In spite of the fears of the devout there was little to lose and much to gain by recognising the human element in the bible. As with the written word, so with the living Word. Without a recognition of the human element in His being, a full assimilation of His teaching and an intimate perception of His real presence are unattainable. If this recognition be accorded, the great past will live again in the present. Hostile critics study the life and character of Christ and the

records of them with a view to proving that He was merely man. Believers may adopt their method with a different object. They may undertake the same study in order to comprehend the wonder of the Man, and so rise to some conception of the wonder of the God. The gospels are read mainly as a handbook of devotion; they should be studied as the biography of a hero. The face-value of its incidents is often neglected, while the reader seeks allegorical and mystical interpretations. To form a mental picture of Christ in His environment, to read ourselves back into His world and then into His ways of thought, such efforts are more than ever needed to-day, and they are more than ever absent. Historic sense and imagination should be allowed to play upon the recorded acts and sayings of Jesus, until a great temple to His memory rises in the high places of the mind, dominating thence the whole intellectual and moral life. Such an enterprise would infuse life and meaning into the Christological formula, and would effect, so to speak, a reconstruction of the human nature of the historic Christ. The Christian's attitude towards the Man Christ Jesus is the "acid test" of the sincerity of his faith. No one can bring intellectual difficulties to a being to whom cognising was a foreign process, nor moral difficulties to one who knew no conflict of wills, nor sorrows to one "all breathing human passion far above." If we

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picture the ideal of all mankind as thinking our thoughts, willing as we will, feeling as we feel, we are united to Him by an intellectual, moral and emotional bond of sympathy. Such a threefold cord is not quickly broken. Communion with such a Being leads the worshipper to the heart of the Christian religion.

THE END

PRINTED BY WILLIAM CLOWES AND SONS, LIMITED, LONDON AND BECCLES.

68705 232R L962

AUTHOR Monophysitism Past and Present / Luce

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